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## OUR PRIVATE LIVES

By Lella Secor Florence

This book, the third in the series, contrasts family life in both countries—domestic habits and customs, how the British and Americans court and get married, build and furnish homes, shop, cook and eat, work and play, go to church and school. It is a frank and disarming picture of private lives in both countries, written in a lively and amusing style. Nora Waln, herself the author of a significant book *Reaching for the Stars*, writes a Foreword. If you are British this book will explain—and often correct—the impression of the talkies and tell you much about the way of life which the American soldier and sailor left behind when they crossed the Atlantic or Pacific Oceans to the battle areas. If you are American—and especially such a soldier or sailor—it will piece together and, perhaps, again correct some of the isolated impressions and experiences you have had.

The author is an American who after a career as a journalist in the Middle West, West, and East has lived many years in England.

AMERICA AND BRITAIN

## OUR PRIVATE LIVES

EDITOR Professor P. Sargant Florence

AMERICA AND BRITAIN

# OUR PRIVATE LIVES

BY LELLA SECOR FLORENCE

FOREWORD BY NORA WALN

WITH 16 ISOTYPE CHARTS IN  
COLOUR AND 32 PHOTOGRAPHS



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P R I N T E D       I N       G R E A T       B R I T A I N

## FOREWORD

The manuscript of *Our Private Lives* came to me in Yorkshire when I was a guest there. Sitting in my hostess's comfortable kitchen on a rocking-chair similar to the rockers I enjoy in my native Pennsylvania, I read aloud to her from these pages while she was expertly busy making apple-pies no different as to ingredients or arrangement from the recipe my family all use at home across the Atlantic. Here, as at my home, apple-pie is eaten with cheese. These pies were baked for harvesters—the farmer, a young daughter, three younger nephews, and an American soldier from Wisconsin who gave his army leave to this family to help get their oats in.

"I'm glad this book is written," commented my hostess as I read. "We need to know each other intimately in our likenesses and our differences if we are to work together effectively for the betterment of the world."

My thought echoes her words. In coming from our United States to visit in Europe I have found one constant reminder. It is that we of our country are a transplanted civilization. Our ancestors sought health in virgin soil for the growth of ideals which they took over with them from Europe. They went out of every part of Europe. We who are descended from those who went early have mixed in us an inheritance from all Europe due to the intermarriage of people guided in choice by love only. As well as ideals, those who went took customs and habits. Some of my ancestors went from Ribblesdale, in Yorkshire.

Nearly three hundred years ago they left a farm here to go out to the New World, as America was then called. They went under a religious conviction. They were Quakers. They belonged to the group of Yorkshire Quakers of Settle Monthly Meeting who felt stirred by God to give support to a "holy experiment in practical living" which the Quaker, William Penn, of Southern England, was moved to found. In the seventeenth-century language of an old letter I have read, the ideal they had in mind was to help to make a "nation which would be a model to all nations," a place where peoples from all the war-troubled nations of Europe would "live together in industrious and prosperous harmony." They took with them not only this idea but the habit of rocking-chairs and apple-pie with cheese.

I would not urge on my United States just an alliance with England. We are kin to all Europe, and in a larger sense to all the other human inhabitants of this world. It is a world in which we are fast becoming close neighbours across distances which separated us before we had the keys to flying and radio. But if we are to clear away evil and cultivate the good we believe in then we need the strength of combined operations, the united abilities of all who realize the practical fact that peoples here

on earth can live together in prosperous harmony. I feel that we shall not be good neighbours until we know each other in our private lives.

In the summer of 1939 I came to England to help here through the ordeal I knew to be coming. In going to America with William Penn, my forbears from Yorkshire were humbly conscious that the little they could do would not be much ; and in coming back I was conscious of my inability to do very much. Yet I had come to give help in every way possible. I had to do this out of gratitude for my inheritance. Mine was a rich inheritance. It was citizenship in the United States of America, a nation where peoples from all the war-troubled nations of Europe live together as one people.

If we are to make the whole world one successful neighbourhood, as we must, then we need to know each other intimately. It is my hope that this series of books will widen its scope as conditions permit and that we shall have volumes of *Our Private Lives* from every other country as well as this one from England. I am glad to have been asked to write a foreword for it, proud to give it my endorsement.

NORA WALN

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## PREFACE

This is the third of the series of books comparing Britain and America in words, pictures, and Isotype charts.

*Only an Ocean Between* and *Our Two Democracies at Work* have already appeared. They dealt with the geographical, racial, and economic background, and the political and public life of the two countries. But private lives remained uncharted, unpictured, and unsung. This book attempts to fill the gap. It was perhaps the hardest of the three tasks, since the private lives of people except, curiously enough, of primitive tribes (including our remote ancestors) have not hitherto been generally thought worthy of serious study, and there is little but personal observation to draw upon.

It is particularly difficult for an author to sum up fairly when, as usually happens, he lives in one country and has only travelled in the other, for he is then contrasting not the comparable facts of two countries, but the raw yet vivid impressions of the visitor with the ripe but matter-of-course experience of the resident. The author of this book, who also wrote *Only an Ocean Between*, has lived as a householder and travelled as a tourist in both countries. Though in these private affairs no one can claim to be an authority, she can speak from ripe experience—and vividly too.

Miss Nora Waln, who has written the Foreword to "Our Private Lives," is the author of "Reaching for the Stars" and "House of Exile."

All the charts in the books of this series have been prepared by the Isotype Institute. They use certain standard internationally understood symbols, or 'types,' according to certain consistent rules, and can be read independently of the text. An Isotype chart usually presents the main facts of the story at first glance, but repays further study by revealing significant detail. Detail that is not significant or clouds the issue is omitted. For this selective and simplified presentation, which needs as much skill as the making of maps, the Isotype Institute takes full responsibility.

Some people, and among them most intellectuals, have been conditioned to learn from texts and even tables of figures. But this is certainly not true of the majority of mankind and perhaps not even true of the majority of readers, who may still take in things most easily by sightseeing. In any case, the visual approach to understanding has been unduly neglected. The combination of picture and chart with text found in this book and its sister books is offered as an experiment in popular education as well as a source of information on facts.

P. SARGANT FLORENCE

*Editor*



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## THE HOUSES WE LIVE IN

A few generations ago, when the farming communities of America were even more sparsely settled than they are now, a social gathering was a memorable and important occasion. The invitation always included the entire family, young and old. My grandmother used to tell us how she would run again and again to the window, watching for the first dark object to appear on the snow-covered road in the distance. Long before darkness fell the guests had all arrived—fathers, mothers, and children, packed in bob-sleighs drawn by the farm-horses. They would tumble out, a little stiff from their long ride, shaking off wisps of the hay that had been heaped in the bottom of the sleigh to keep every one warm. The crisp sound of crunching snow under their feet would mingle with laughter and greetings as the women and children streamed into the house to warm themselves at the wood fire, while the menfolk put up the horses.

As night drew in the infants, of which there was always a numerous brood, were tucked into beds and cots and cradles, and put to sleep in one of the bedrooms where, in the intervals between the square dances and the bountiful supper, a watchful eye could be kept upon them. It was a favourite mischief of the older boys and girls who were allowed to stay up for the festivities to slip into the nursery while the gaiety was in full swing, and interchange the babies, wrapping Mrs Reynold's Ellen Mary in the shawl of Mrs Kelly's Patrick. Then, in the dim candle-light of the early morning when the party broke up, the young culprits would hide themselves in the shadows to enjoy the laughter and consternation which ensued when mothers arrived to claim their infants.

In 1942 about three-quarters of a million babies were born in Britain, and about two and a quarter million made their squalling debut in the United States. If some mischievous spirit had been able to swoop down upon these newcomers on either side of the Atlantic and whisk them into each other's cots and cradles, British and American parents would have had an even harder job to sort out their offspring. No Oxford accent, no American drawl, in the cry of those infants. No distinguishing characteristics of form or face. No national birthmark to identify this one as American, that one as British. The cry of a baby, like laughter and music, is an international language. An infant, except for a possible slant in the eyes or a variation in skin colour, is pretty much the same biological specimen the world over.

But almost from the first hour of birth the national environment begins to leave its mark. The American infant would probably be ushered into the world by a medical man who is invariably called "Doctor." The midwife who so often functions as doctor, nurse, and valued household adviser in the poorer households of Britain is almost unknown over there.

In America the newborn infant would be deposited in a bassinet, or he might inherit a wooden cradle with rockers, such as were used in colonial times. The British infant might do his shouting from a Moses basket. At a later stage he would advance to a cot, while his American counterpart would find himself in a crib. The British parent would take his offspring out in a perambulator of polished wood equipped with a leather hood and cover against the not infrequent rain. The American youngster would ride in a baby-carriage made of woven reeds. Later he would graduate

to a go-cart and the young Briton to a push-chair. American babies learn to creep, British babies to crawl.

Children born in the United States would have a slightly better chance of survival in their first year. Between 1933 and 1937 an average of 62 out of every thousand infants died in the United Kingdom (which includes Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland), and 57 in the United States. Both countries, let it be said with pride, have made phenomenal progress in reducing infant mortality since the beginning of the century.

There is no very significant difference between the infant death rates in our two countries, and other dissimilarities are only superficial. The gap widens and deepens as our children grow older and imbibe the traditions and characteristics of their separate national cultures. In homes, schools, churches—at work and play—we build our private lives, and in the process we turn out as individuals with such distinctive national habits of thought, speech, and behaviour that it's as easy as pie to say "He is British" or "She is American."

Our private lives are considerably different. To start with, they are so much more private in Britain than in America. "The Englishman's home is his castle" still, which means that a stranger is likely to be regarded with suspicion until his credentials are established. Maybe this is partly a hang-over from feudal days, when the barons staked out claims in various parts of the country and built castles from which to keep a sharp eye on neighbour barons, who had a habit of sneaking up to attack whenever they got bored with hunting and feasting. True, the castle is no longer surrounded by a defensive moat. Instead, there is a wall or hedge to discourage the invader. True, the windows are no longer slits in the stone walls of the house through which arrows can be aimed at the potential enemy. Instead, windows are fortified with curtains of lace or cretonne and with aspidistras, potted flowers, or plaster figurines; the well-to-do have heavy hangings of brocade or velvet which can be closed at night to shut out the irreverent gaze of the passer-by.

The front door of my own house in England has no knob or handle on the outside at all; it can only be opened from the inside after an enormous bolt has been shifted. It is a mid-Victorian house built for security and privacy. This turned out to have an advantage we hadn't anticipated, for when the vast windows had to be blacked out we discovered for the first time the existence of neatly folding inside shutters which could be closed, bolted, and barred. At the entrance to the drive there is a great wooden gate which is so formidable that I doubt whether I should have the temerity to go in myself if I ever found it closed.

Yes, the Briton has a strong feeling for privacy, which extends from the country gentleman, in his walled estate with its gate-lodge through which visitors must be sieved, to the working woman who keeps herself to herself, and doesn't want anyone barging into her domestic fastness.

The American doesn't set so much store by privacy, and there is a great deal of running to and fro between neighbours. His propensity for a more communal life developed naturally in a young country where, within living memory, the rigours of pioneering made it necessary for neighbours to stick together if they hoped to survive at all. His ancestors moved about from place to place, pushing steadily westward. The American's home still is wherever he hangs up his hat. The

old-fashioned greeting to a visiting friend is "Make yourself at home," and he usually does.

The contrasting attitude of the British and Americans is well illustrated by this letter from an English friend who is working in Washington for the duration of the war :

I really wonder whether all the convenience of hot water and kitchens full of gadgets really is worth the price you pay in noise through these paper-thin walls, or that even worse terror, the much-vaunted 'neighbourliness.' Do you realize that you can't keep your fellow-residents out of your own apartment? Not only do I have to put up with their radios, their piano-playing and their voices, but I'm d——d if they don't invade my privacy almost every evening on some flimsy pretext or another. They never meet you on the stairs but you get asked in to see them. I never realized, until I came to this country to live, what an essential protection the English 'reserve' is. Give me the Englishman's castle for my permanent home, and not the small-scale Union Station which seems to be the American ideal.

Whether it is more commendable to own the retiring temperament of the Briton or the gregarious habits of the American is of no consequence. What matters is that this marked difference in character should be acknowledged and accepted with tolerance on either side.

American homes are innocent of defensive features. Front lawns usually present a continuous greensward along the entire street, broken only by a footpath to the house and the driveway to the garage. It is this, in a tree-lined avenue, which gives the pleasant park-like aspect to so many American residential streets. A veranda built along the front of the house is a popular feature of American homes. In the summer it becomes the principal family sitting-room, and sometimes it is used as a sleeping-porch as well, for the intense heat of the day lasts on through most of the night. Brightly coloured chairs and tables, a comfortable bed-swing (rather like a settee) suspended from the ceiling, and the inevitable pitcher or jug of iced fruit juices combine to make the porch the pleasantest part of the house. The porch furniture is left out all summer except when there is a torrential downpour, and this doesn't usually last more than an hour. In the winter it is stored away, and the storm-shed is put up. This is a small sectional shed erected round the front door as a protection against wintry blasts. Here the visitor shakes the snow off his clothes and takes off his rubbers, or goloshes.

Sometimes the whole veranda is screened in as a protection against flies and mosquitoes, and so are all the doors and windows. To the British a screen is something which shuts off the view or draughts and affords privacy. To Americans it is a fine-mesh wire-netting which protects against pests but not pryers. Americans usually speak of the ground surrounding their houses as the front yard and the back yard. When they talk about a garden they more often mean the actual flower or vegetable beds.

The Americans are a restless, roving people. I never lived in any single house longer than three years before I came to England, and there are few homes which are occupied year after year by succeeding generations of the same family, as happens so often

in Britain. Americans, millions of them, move every year, often just to another house a few blocks away, sometimes to another city. Occasionally they put the whole house on rollers and move it down the street to another lot—or, as the British would say, to another site. I remember how envious I felt when I was a little girl of the family which went on living in the house during this slow, exciting journey. Britons returning from the United States sometimes find themselves disbelieved when they tell this tale or other fabulous accounts of what happens over there, such as, for instance, how the Americans dig up and transplant fully grown trees when they are too impatient to wait for young ones to grow ; or wash away a high hill by hydraulic pressure when it stands in the way of some building development. A barren patch of earth one day, a fully grown tree the next ; a high hill to-day, a level plain to-morrow. All this is quite true and illustrates the impatience of Americans to get going.

America is a land of contrasts and contradictions. Though the people move about so much, and though they are sometimes impatient to experience immediately full realization of their dreams, they are, nevertheless, profound home-lovers and home-builders. Indeed, in America they never speak of building a house—it is always building a home. And a clear distinction is drawn between a woman who is only a good housekeeper and one who is a good home-maker.

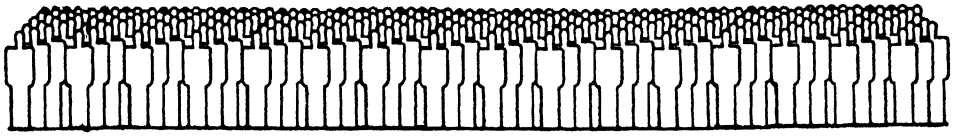
It is the dearest wish of most Americans eventually to possess a home of their own, and practically half the families in the country, including a large proportion of wage-earners, have embarked on home-ownership ; many of them are making the payments by monthly instalments. I have known families who built the house themselves after working-hours, board by board, the women helping with the men. It is common practice to put up a shed or hut meanwhile, which will eventually become the garage, in which the family can live until at least a couple of rooms in the new home are ready.

In England it can be assumed that among the 10 per cent. of the population who constitute the upper-income group a fair proportion own their homes, either outright or as leaseholders. A complicated calculation based on loans by numerous Building Societies and other financial organizations suggests a figure of some three million additional families (almost 30 per cent. of the population) who have bought or are buying their own homes. But this is hardly more than a bold guess.

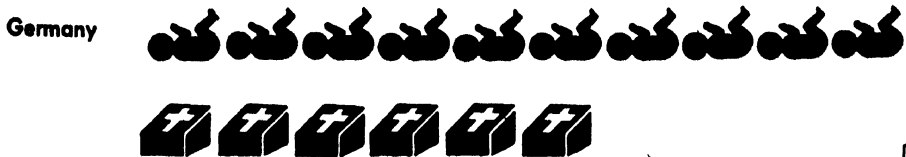
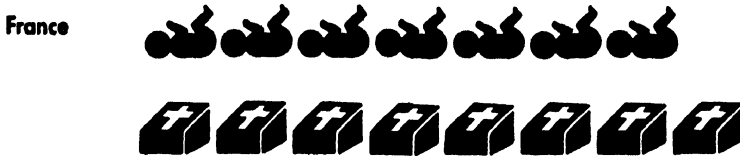
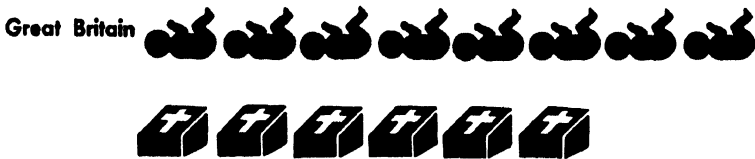
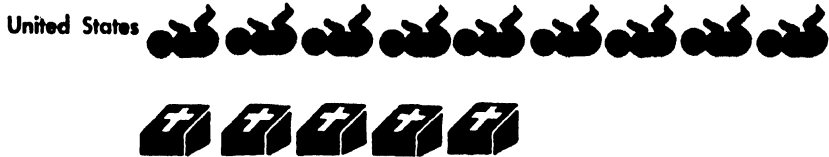
In choosing the aspect for the living-rooms Americans prefer to avoid the southern exposure which is so desirable in England. There is so much sunshine that the problem is rather to keep it out than to let it in. Americans like their homes warm in winter, and this is easily achieved with a central-heating plant (known usually as the furnace) or with anthracite coal stoves. The latest thing in furnaces is an oil-fed boiler which can be filled up in the autumn and then forgotten for the rest of the winter. The heat is thermostatically regulated. But keeping the house cool in summer is not so easy a matter, though many of the houses being built to-day are equipped with air-conditioning. Most American trains are now air-conditioned, as are also many shops and public buildings.

It seems to be the ideal in Great Britain to construct houses which will last for ever. The result is admirable when beautiful buildings, dating from the eleventh century onward, survive for the enjoyment of posterity. But what could be more lamentable

# Births and Deaths in 1938

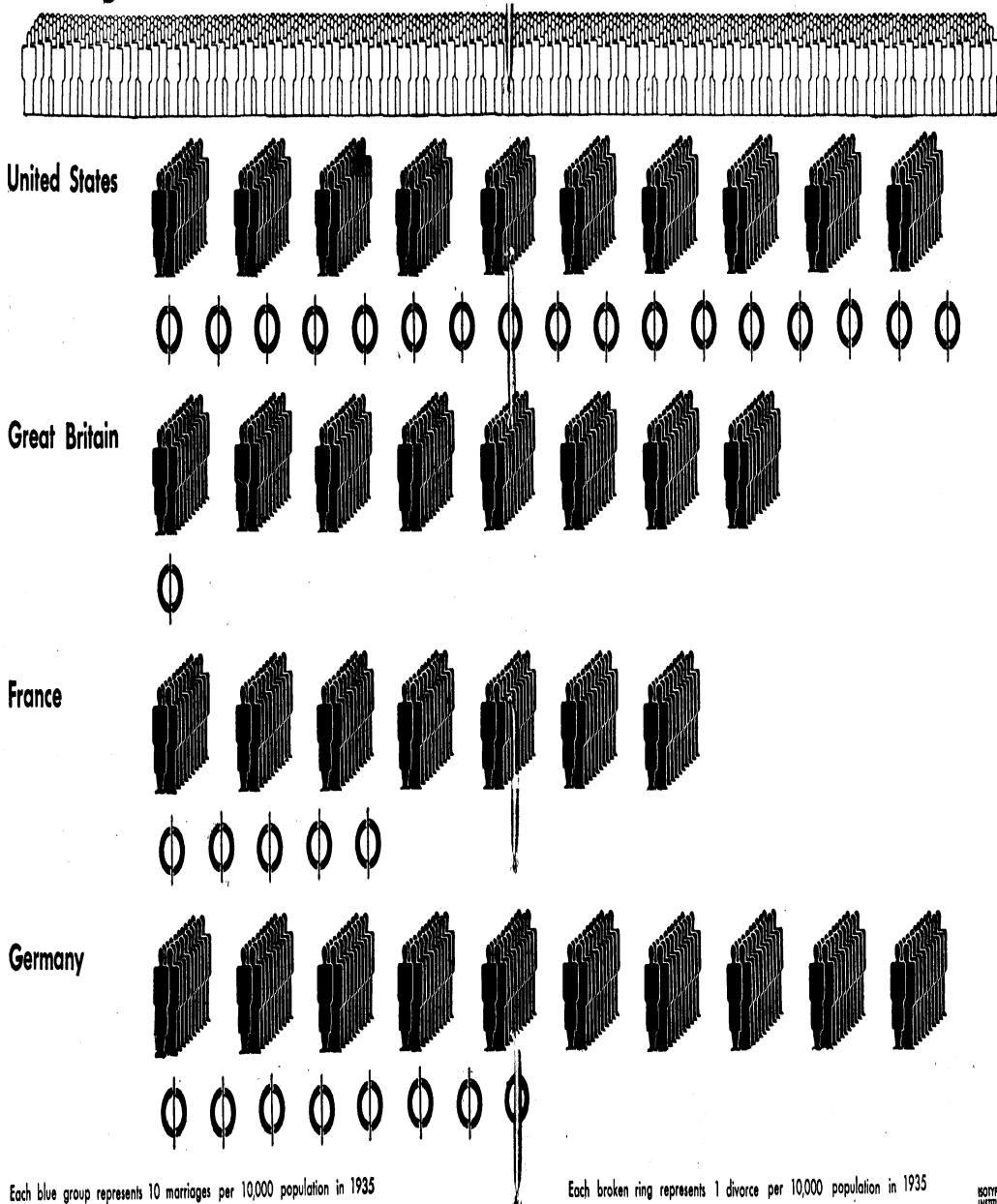


per 500 population



Britain and America come between Germany and France in birth-rates and have comparatively low death-rates. For a simple comparison between private lives these rates are based on general population and take no account of age grouping. But more babies than coffins does not mean that the increase in population is going to continue. That depends on the proportion of women of reproductive age and their fertility.

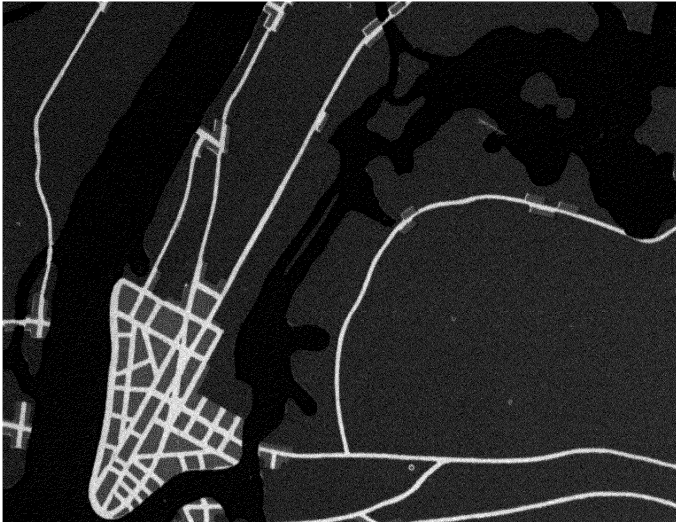
# Marriage and Divorce



In America divorces average almost two to every ten marriages, but are rarer in Europe.

# New York

## Beginning of the 19th Century



## Beginning of the 20th Century



In America and Britain cities have grown rapidly in the last hundred years, but as comparison with chart 4 shows their lay-out is very different.



than ugly rows of brick slums resolutely refusing to fall to pieces? In America houses are not generally put up to last through generations. The favourite building material is wood, which doesn't have the lasting qualities of brick or stone. It is not surprising, therefore, that only a few of the original colonial houses remain, or that worn-out frame houses fall to bits more readily and have to be replaced sooner.

In Britain wood is seldom used, and brick houses are the general rule. But native materials often distinguish local regions. The warm yellow-grey limestone of the Cotswolds, the chalk flints of the Chilterns and East Anglia, and the grey granite of Aberdeen lend to each district a distinct individuality. Unfortunately, with the advent of easier transport these unique regional features, which spring from the earth itself, are getting submerged in an all-pervading brick villa with mock-Tudor wood facings, sprawling in ribbon development along the main roads.

In America modern and simple architectural styles are more frequent than the imitation Gothic structures put up two generations ago, which are now considered very old-fashioned. In almost all parts of the country there is to be found a type of domestic architecture which may be said to be essentially American—a wooden house with clapboard walls made of narrow horizontal boards overlapping each other, and a roof of cedar shingles, which are thin strips of wood about the size of a slate. The outline is simple and straightforward. The house may be square, or it may have an oblong upright section with a side wing. There is nearly always a front veranda and usually a back porch too, where the housewife sits on a summer day to prepare vegetables or do other household chores.

It is not so easy to define a characteristic English style. Architectural designs range from the lovely Elizabethan and Georgian country houses surrounded by their own walled parks (described by estate agents as "country seats"), the dignified crescents and squares of Bath and London, and the crenellated Victorian styles sprouting protuberances (designated by the same authorities as "gentlemen's residences"), to the austerity workmen's dwellings built in unadorned rows; and, of course, the thatched country cottages so much admired by Americans.

The development of modern flats, or, as the Americans say, apartment houses, has been carried much farther in America than in Britain, where there is a general prejudice against this type of dwelling. The British hold the view that every one wants a garden of his own—or ought to want it, anyway. They take delight in a strip of brown earth, a spade, and a seed catalogue, which leads them naturally to prefer a separate house set in its own plot of ground. Many Americans aren't endowed with that same feeling for pottering about with growing things. They have a greater aptitude for communal life, and don't mind sharing the gardens which are laid out round nearly all modern flats; or they simply rely on the tree-lined avenues for outdoor enjoyment.

Both America and Great Britain face a serious housing shortage which has never been resolved in spite of the housing programmes initiated by the Governments of both countries between the two wars. The situation has been worsened in Great Britain through the destruction of many houses in air raids. On the other hand, the building boom, initiated by private enterprise, which was well under way in Britain in 1933 never occurred in America, where the rate of house-building since 1929 was far slower than in Britain. The United States Government promoted

building by direct financing, subsidies, and loans to individuals, but its accomplishments can hardly be compared with the achievements in Britain, where local authorities such as borough and county councils put up thousands of houses aided by subsidies from the national exchequer. Between 1924 and 1938 about 3,700,000 houses were built in Great Britain with and without State aid. When it is remembered that there are hardly eleven million families the magnitude of this achievement becomes apparent. The interior arrangements of many of the new municipal houses still leave much to be desired, owing perhaps to the need for economy. While bathrooms have been introduced, it is astonishing to find that few have wash-hand basins (or wash-bowls), so that the family still has to use the scullery sink where the housewife washes pots and pans and cleans vegetables. And the lavatory is still frequently put in a small shed at the back door, though some Britons consider this preferable to the "barbarous" American habit of housing the lavatory in the bathroom. I think it would be agreed that most American modern houses are a step ahead in the convenience and beauty of plumbing and kitchen arrangements. Of town and city houses, both old and new, 90 per cent. have water laid on and electric lighting, 80 per cent. have private indoor lavatories, and 70 per cent. are equipped with baths or shower-baths.

Farm homes are not so well provided. A majority of them still have no water-supply inside the house, no electricity, and no indoor lavatories. The same is true of Britain. American farms are generally isolated and far from a town; the village, which forms the natural centre for groups of farms in Britain, is almost unknown in America, except in New England. I know districts out West where a single general store and post-office combined is the only centre for any communal contacts within thirty or forty miles.

In America farms are more often worked by the farmer himself, with the help of his sons and perhaps one or two hired men who live with the farmer's family. This differs from the British system of employing farm labourers who live in their own cottages on the farm property or in near-by villages. In both countries the cities, with their wider opportunities, have lured the young and enterprising from the farms. This is especially true of Britain, where 40 per cent. of the people live in cities of 100,000 population or over as compared with 30 per cent. in America.

There isn't much to choose between the slums of America and the slums of Britain—if you happen to be wanting slums. I think the small brick boxes attached in rows like multiple Siamese twins lining either side of a dreary street in English working-class districts look more depressing from the outside than the tenements to be found in American cities and in Scotland. But inside even an approach to gracious living is impossible, whether it's a British back-to-back house or an American tenement where families are crowded together in sunless rooms connected by dark and dangerous staircases. At least the small brick house does not have the same fire risk as the tenement. We must both accept with shame and humiliation the responsibility of having allowed such black spots to spread across our pleasant lands. Private lives must have as a primary basis a pleasant home environment if they are to be happy and fruitful.

## COME RIGHT IN AND MAKE YOURSELVES AT HOME

But how I've been running on. I ought to have warned you in the beginning that it's my unabashed intention to pry into the private lives of average Americans and average Britons—shamelessly to watch them flirt, see them get married, eat and drink, educate children, take time off for fun.

If this seems a frivolous resolution in these days of catastrophic world events it can be easily justified. For in the last resort it's the private life of each of us that shapes the destinies of the world. The ultimate aim of all political action, except that taken under the totalitarian philosophy, must be to provide a happy, prosperous, and healthy home environment in which the individual may lead a harmonious private life.

A man without a private life is a danger to the community—Hitler, for example. If he had been a really successful house-painter, with an ever-loving wife and a brood of respectful children, if he had gone to church on Sunday and bolstered up his self-esteem by reading the lesson or passing the collection plate, if he had blown off steam occasionally with his fellow Elks or Masons by dressing up in mysterious symbols and indulging in a little fantasy, if at the week-ends he had taken his pay envelope home to say cheerfully to his wife, "Here you are, ducky—let me have an extra shilling pocket-money this week if you can spare it. How's Herman's measles?"—but why speculate on a unity which was never achieved? Let it be a moral to us all—every one needs a private life. But not too private. Not so private that the affairs of our own immediate family become the only thing of importance, or that our interest is confined to our own town or country, which makes for isolationism. We all suffer from this a little. There are some counties in England which regard a newcomer from another county as a foreigner. The Scot wants you to understand that he's British but not English, and the Welshman reminds you that he really belongs to a separate nation.

In America if you mistook a Texan for a New Yorker he'd feel insulted enough to draw his six-shooter—if, in fact, as all Texans are supposed to do, he did tote a gun. A Southerner would have the same reaction if you called him a Yankee.

But the world has shrunk too much for us to harbour these limited loyalties to the exclusion of wider sympathies. Britain, more than America, has been isolationist in her attitude to other nationalities. She has never encouraged visitors. The Duke of Wellington, it is said, was doubtful about the Great Exhibition of 1851, because he feared it would bring too many strangers to England. Until very recent years the general British attitude has been, "Visit this country if you must, but be as quiet and unobtrusive about it as you can." People suffered from xenophobia. But to-day in Britain all is changed. The pleasantly competent girl bus-conductors take the greatest pains to work out the meaning of a halting phrase, and set their foreign passengers down at the right stop.

At home the British show more courtesy to each other in public places than Americans do. The English are gentle, slow-moving, in contrast to the more pushful hurry of the Americans, and they have an abiding sense of justice and fair play. I don't mean that the Americans are not polite as individuals. On the contrary, they say "Yes, ma'am," and "No, sir," and these courtesy titles are not reserved for their elders



Wooden house painted white with green shutters, veranda to sit on during summer evenings, unfenced lawn sloping down to the side walk—this home of former President Coolidge in Massachusetts is typically American.

or their betters. American men show a hundred small chivalrous attentions to women which would make the average Briton feel foolish and self-conscious. This may all seem much more like public life than the private lives we set out to explore. But private life depends so entirely on its public environment. Likewise, the responsibility for the kind of world we're going to have rests not with Governments and men in public life but with the common man and the common woman. Just now it rests perhaps more particularly with the common American and the common Briton. We are the people who have to iron out our prejudices, get to the root of our animosities, adapt ourselves to each other's way of life without trying to make an identical pattern for us both, which would be dull and boring.

The other day I was getting on a bus in Birmingham just as a group of American soldiers were passing. An English girl said to her companion, "Fat, pudgy Americans with trousers that don't match!" At the next stop a member of a Scottish regiment boarded the bus. He was fatter than any American I have seen, and wore trews which had a tough job to keep their seams from bursting. The girl looked at him



Houses in a British residential street are separated from the pavement by walls and ornamental hedges. Bay-windows are a popular feature of suburban villas. Charming little gardens at the back are not visible from the street.

with a dreamy sort of pride. "Scotch," she commented. To her the American was a foreigner with queer habits. The Scot with his plaid trousers, which seem exceedingly comic to the American at first sight, was an accepted part of her national environment. Her animosity obviously was not directed in general against the fat man, but against the foreigner. Nor was it, in the abstract, against oddity in clothes, but rather the oddity that hadn't become commonplace for her.

Possibly this particular girl was suffering from some personal pique, because in general the American soldiers, with their easy friendliness, have gone down very well with British girls. But they haven't escaped criticism altogether. It takes time for the British public to accept behaviour and outlook which is in so many ways different from their own.

And some Americans, on both sides of the Atlantic, have been going round with a chip on their shoulders, waiting for some Briton to knock it off. They admire the British intensely—the epic story of Dunkirk and of the Battle of Britain will live



"You'd sure be pleased with knives and forks like these, ma'am. You could be proud to set your table for anybody—real stylish eating, these are." You can see the American housewife is weakening.

in the hearts of Americans as long as it is remembered by the British. But, just as many of my English friends have expressed genuine anxiety lest their country is going to become too Americanized, so the Americans are bracing themselves against too widespread a British influence.

Viewed objectively, this attitude on either side is rather childish. It will be largely dissipated when we all realize that neither has any wish to impose his way of life on the other, though it will be a thousand pities if we are both too bull-headed to accept new ideas which present-day contacts make available. After all, it is the common people who harbour these attitudes; maybe it will promote sweet reasonableness if we probe into our private lives to see how we got like that.

We have looked at a sample of the homes in which British and Americans live. Sooner or later we'll have to walk boldly up to the front door and ring the bell. In America let's choose any average home in a small city in the Middle West. On a warm summer afternoon the front door will be open, and we can catch a glimpse of



The tradesman is a welcome visitor in this peaceful Surrey village. He pauses to exchange greetings with the housewife. "It's a fine show of lupins you've got there, Mrs Bailey."

the interior through the screen door. In Britain the front door very seldom stands ajar even on the hottest day. The American housewife will answer our ring herself, for the vast majority do their own housework. So, of course, do the majority of British women. But the British housewife with a moderate income is likely to have a maid, while the American woman with the same income most certainly wouldn't. In both countries the bell or knocker sounds pretty often—the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker, collecting their weekly bills, the vacuum-cleaner salesman, the man who wants to buy old gold or false teeth, the insurance agent ; the gypsy hawker in England, and in America the boy who is working his way through college on magazine subscriptions, and the ubiquitous book canvasser. America is the canvasser's paradise. The American housewife is more accessible than the British, and perhaps more susceptible too. She would hate to turn the canvasser away for fear he might have something novel to show her. Besides, she always has deep sympathy for the under-dog, especially if he's trying to pay his way.



Most Americans are content to enjoy the pleasant park-like aspect of their tree-shaded streets with grass verges. They do not have the Briton's passion for gardening, and are more interested in the appearance of the community as a whole than in their own flower beds.

But ours is a friendly visit, and the door will be thrown open cordially. The housewife's name may be O'Leary or Olson or Kolendorski or just plain Smith or Cohen, but she'll say "Come right in and make yourselves at home."

An American home reveals itself at once with the utmost candour, for doors between rooms are never closed, as they are likely to be in British homes. Perhaps the Briton's bent for barricades is one explanation, but it is more likely that doors are closed to keep the cold of one room from penetrating into the cold of another. This habit of closed doors gets ingrained in the winter, when an open fire has its work cut out to keep even one room tolerably warm. Passages—or, as the Americans would say, halls—are left to the harsh judgment of nature. It is not surprising that the British have developed qualities of steadfast resolution which stand them in good stead during times of crisis. They have plenty of practice every night when they have to tear themselves from their firesides and venture into cold passages on their way to arctic bedrooms.

I early learned, when being entertained as a dinner guest in British homes, that it





"A garden is a lovesome thing," especially when it receives the loving thought bestowed by the British. The householder digging in his small plot, or the professional gardener lavishing care on the gentleman's estate, are both blessed with green fingers. Neat borders and rock gardens make a charming background for the iris.

is disastrous to wear a low-backed gown without the protection of a shawl or jacket. Because just as you have begun to imbibe a little warmth by bagging the seat nearest the fire in the drawing-room, dinner is announced, and you proceed to the dining-room where the gas-fire has all too obviously only just been lighted. The icy contact of a polished chair takes a good deal of the sparkle out of the most entertaining guest. I regret to say that this cold-shoulder treatment has been meted out in my own house when I have not been watchful enough to get every available fire going early.

It is the American habit—and I suspect it is largely a matter of habit—to keep their houses hot in winter; a temperature of 72 degrees or even more is usual. Central heating warms the whole house evenly. In a country where the temperature may hover round zero for weeks on end life would be intolerable without warm houses. Central heating is not so important in Britain where the climate is generally milder. Many British visitors to the United States find as much discomfort in the heat of American houses as Americans find in the cold houses of Britain. We must both learn to put on or take off more clothes.



Pa is pleased as his knife sinks into the tender chicken Ma has been fattening up in the hen coop. Fatty grins in anticipation. Fresh milk for the whole family, a big bowl of salad, hot biscuits—no wonder this farm family looks well fed.

Some American homes have a fireplace, which is used on festive occasions for good cheer rather than for warmth. Anyone living in Britain will understand why the open fire is so popular. It is the brightest possible substitute for sunshine. There is no more welcome sight when you come in on a cold, wet day than the cheerful blaze of the fire. Besides, there are few evenings even in summer when a fire is not necessary to comfort (at least, so Americans think), and the open grate is an economical way of providing heat for short periods.

The focal point for the family circle in an American home is the centre table, which is usually furnished with an electric lamp and strewn with current magazines and newspapers. In houses without central heating the family in winter gathers round an anthracite-coal stove which is kept going night and day. The chesterfield is called a davenport. There may be rocking-chairs in the sitting-room and on the veranda as well—that symbol, as some of my English friends think, of restless Americans who cannot sit still even when they sit still. The radio in the corner may not



A British family relaxes round the fire in the evening. Dad comments on the news while Mum darns stockings, and the young miss puzzles out her knitting stitches. Both youngsters wear slippers about the house, a custom not general in the U.S.A.

yet be paid for, but it's the latest model. The telephone is far more widely used in America than in Britain, and most housewives would find it difficult to do without this convenience. There are sixteen telephones to every hundred people in America and six to every hundred in Britain. But the gap between the number of radios in each country is much smaller—twenty to every hundred in America and sixteen in Britain.

The windows of American homes are hung with soft ruffled curtains (the British would say frilled) which are permanently tied back and are known as drapes. Linen blinds are always drawn down over the upper half of the window to shut out the glare of the sun.

Bedrooms have clothes-closets built in—the kind you can walk into—so there is no need of wardrobes, as in British bedrooms. The nicest rooms in the house are the kitchen and bathroom. Both are, of course, heated.

It must not be supposed that every American house has an electric cooking-stove,



In the early dawn of a frosty morning the American lorry-man, with his plaid mackinaw and cap, makes the round of farms to collect the milk-cans. Every one in America drinks milk—grown-ups as well as children.

or even a gas-stove. Hundreds of housewives, especially in the country, still cook on a wood-burning kitchen stove, which is hot work in the summer. Stove wood is measured by the cord (128 cubic feet), and it is a common sight to see piles of it four feet long stacked up at the back door or in the woodshed. The British speak of putting a log on the fire ; Americans would say a stick or chunk of wood. To them a log is a tree-trunk and not the sort of thing that could readily be put on the fire. Sticks which the British use for lighting a fire are known as kindling. The wood-pile is the place where the menfolk of the family exercise their brawn and muscle, and it is usually the duty of the small sons to see that the kitchen wood-box is filled with sticks cut to the right size. I remember, too, that when tramps used to come to the door they were always put to work on the wood-pile, while my mother put on the spider (or frying pan) to cook them ham and eggs and replenished the coffee-pot.

In Britain working-class families tend to cook (on a coal range which also makes an open fire) and eat in the kitchen, which is sometimes called the sitting-room,



Early on an autumn morning the milkman makes his rounds of London while the great city stirs itself for its morning cup of tea. The milkman's horse likes to stand on the pavement while waiting for his master.

while the messier kitchen jobs are done in the scullery. The other sitting-room or parlour is usually kept spick and span for visitors, and the open fire is lighted there only on festive occasions. In upper-class houses the sitting-room is called a lounge or drawing-room, and meals are taken in a separate room. The kitchen used to be put in the basement, and all meals had to be carried up a flight of stairs. But more recently built houses have the dining-room conveniently near the kitchen, often connected by a labour-saving service hatch.

American women have had, I think, greater opportunities of acquiring taste in house decoration and furnishing (though they don't always seem to profit by it) than British housewives. For many years women's magazines have been among the largest and the most widely circulated of monthly publications. They have stimulated interest in cooking, clothes, and cosmetics. They discuss and illustrate good taste in decorating and furnishing the home, and in particular show home-makers how to improvise attractive furniture, and use the most unlikely materials for coverings and hangings at low cost. Beyond the domestic sphere they keep the housewife informed about

the march of public events and about prominent personalities and what they are up to. Two of the oldest and best-known had in 1942 a net circulation between them of just under 7,500,000 copies, which means that they went into nearly a quarter of all the homes in America, and were read, of course, by many more people—both men and women—than the original subscribers.

British women haven't been catered for in so comprehensive a way. The magazines devoted to domestic interests are not so numerous, nor, I believe, so widely read. The average British housewife does not seem to have the magazine habit to the same extent as the Americans ; it is, perhaps, because her intelligence and interests have been underestimated by editors.

The likelihood that most American girls, when they get married, will be doing their own housework has stressed the need for training in preparation for home-making. Girls, as a normal practice, learn cooking and the domestic arts both in school and in their mothers' kitchens. And so do boys, for that matter. It is a poor specimen of American boy who cannot turn out quite a creditable meal. Boys as well as girls help their mothers, and no husband considers it unmanly or *infra dig.* to take a hand in domestic work. In Britain, where almost every woman is doing some war work outside her home, the menfolk, who have not hitherto been as domesticated as American men, are now developing an interest in home affairs, and showing unexpected skill in the kitchen.

American cookery has been enriched by national dishes from every country in the world introduced by immigrants. Curiosity, which is a natural American characteristic, lures the cook into culinary experiments with the result that American meals are more varied than British. I never heard the term 'plain cooking' until I started housekeeping in England, and then I met it all too often.

More pie is consumed in America, I imagine, than in any other country. It's a favourite both as a dessert or sweet at home, and as a snack with coffee in drug-stores. It is not the deep, juicy pie familiar in Britain, but a shallow sweet with pie-crust (pastry) on the bottom and usually, though not always, on the top. Apple-pie (usually served with cheese—"Apple-pie without cheese is like a kiss without a squeeze") is the stand-by, sometimes topped with ice-cream, in which case it becomes pie *à la mode*. But there's a great variety of others—chocolate, peach, raisin, banana, lemon, pumpkin.

My English friends can't abide the thought of cheese with pie, and stick to biscuits, which in America are known as crackers ; biscuits are small flaky things rather like unsweetened scones. Americans have hot breads at most meals. They like their toast hot, too, and dripping with butter. "Why," asked an American visitor at breakfast the other day, "do the English always put their toast out to air in a rack, and never eat it until it's cold?" I guess it's because they prefer it that way for breakfast ; when toast is served at tea it is hot and buttered. Tea is the pleasantest of all English meals especially when there are hot buttered muffins—a dish Americans have imitated not too successfully.

Americans take pride in good cooking, and talk a great deal about eating, while the British, it has always seemed to me, cultivate a studied indifference to food. It is not good form, I learned, after I had reduced my hostess and her English dinner-party to silence by asking the maid to let me have the recipe for her delicious savoury,

to comment on the food you are eating. An American hostess would be flattered by such an attention.

This indifference to food, coupled with conservatism in taste and a reluctance even to sample a new dish, makes for monotony in the table of the average British household. A standard series of meals runs through the week: the Sunday joint with two 'veg.' and a boiled pudding or apple-tart, or perhaps a roly-poly with currants, which schoolboys sometimes call 'spotted dog' or 'vaccinated baby's arm'; and for the rest of the week, while it lasts, cold cuts from the joint. I first met the milk pudding on a British steamship *en route* to England. It was a thin and revolting mush (though I was to learn later how good a milk pudding can be), and my first reaction was one of sympathy for the chef, who, I imagined, must be feeling terrible over the failure of his pudding. When I saw my fellow-passengers eating it without comment my heart warmed to people so anxious not to hurt the cook's feeling, and I felt I could do no less. But when identically the same stuff appeared the next day it was too much!

The one time I really appreciated unimaginative British food was on the aeroplane from Portugal when I was flying back to England—the country I love so deeply and couldn't bear to be away from in her dark hours of peril. The steward said, rather as though it were a commonplace happening and to be taken as a joke, "You'd better not have any soup—something's gone wrong with it." So we had a slice of cold meat and some milk pudding, and I felt with joy that I was in truth already in England.

Yet some of Britain's great contributions to civilization are her traditional dishes. Steamed ginger pudding floating in golden syrup is a thing to dream about, and so is roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, or a dish of kippers. The British are connoisseurs of cheese, and they manufacture the best biscuits and the best jam and marmalade in the world. England has a wonderful tradition of good living and of pleasure in food. Johnson, according to Boswell, talked of good eating with uncommon satisfaction. "Some people," said he, "have a foolish way of not minding what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and very carefully; for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind anything else." And here, more currently, is Mrs Beeton's suggestion for dinner:

Good Wife's Soup  
Lobster Patties  
Chicken Creams  
Saddle of Lamb, Mint Sauce  
New Potatoes, French Beans  
Roast Hazel Hen, Salad  
Chestnut Pudding  
Coffee Cream  
Cheese Fritters

Why has England become content with a cut off the joint and two veg.? Obviously Mrs Beeton's meal is not planned for the coal-miner or the loom-tender. But the mysterious thing is that skill and interest in cooking the simple materials available to all are so widely absent. I have often talked to British housewives about food. They've mostly shrugged their shoulders and said, "I can't be bothered."

Mr Bevin has said in the House of Commons that plans are on foot to attract tourists to Britain after the war. But if visitors are to come, and to go away pleased, Mr Bevin will have to roll up his sleeves and turn his genius to educating cooks. Many English people agree on this matter. Sir Norman Angell, discussing (in *Lilliput*) Britain's reluctance to use the skill of foreigners, put the matter tersely :

But it is quite certain that we can never develop that tourist trade, or, indeed, continue to maintain our foreign trade, if we make it a rule never to employ a foreigner. The rich American . . . who comes to Europe with his family for a good time will not make Britain his headquarters (nor travel on British ships), if the hotels in our centres of great historic interest continue to offer him for dinner "a nice leg of mutton, with greens and potatoes, followed by a nice suet pudding."

English cooking, when it is skilfully done, can be superb—like the meals, I am told, served at the high tables in Oxford and Cambridge colleges. I've an idea that cooking done exclusively for men—and perhaps by them—is of a higher standard. The trouble is that English cooking frequently is not skilfully done, and that British housewives show little interest in perfecting this essential art. War scarcity has done a great deal to stimulate an interest in food and in new recipes, which, let all the people pray, may benefit post-war cookery. I don't suggest that in the small average restaurant or the average home in America you won't sometimes find a poor standard of cooking. You possibly will ; in England you probably will.

Meal-times and menus vary considerably from farms to cities and as between industrial workers and professional people in both countries. In America farm-workers, where it is very hot, often start work at dawn, and take time off for rest during the heat of the day. The eating habits of the upper and the working-class in Britain vary more than in any sections of America. In Britain the workers have breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper (biggest meals at week-ends) ; in the upper-income groups the order is breakfast, lunch, tea, and dinner. Americans take three meals a day—the main one at midday, though in cities the habit of evening dinner has become fairly common. They drop into the corner drug-store for a snack between meals at all times of the day—maybe a piece of pie or cake or a doughnut and a cup of coffee, or perhaps only an ice-cream soda or Coca-Cola, or a glass of milk. Americans drink coffee when the British drink tea, but they don't have as many cups during a single day. The average British housewife drinks at least eight or nine cups of tea every day, starting the first thing in the morning before breakfast and finishing the last thing before going to bed. Tea is served in offices and factories in mid-afternoon.

It is characteristic of the average American that he wants to be doing something all the time—if he's not eating or drinking he is smoking or chewing gum. The gum-chewing habit is not as universal as Britons believe, but it is wide spread enough to merit the criticism of those who regard it as unpleasant.

Americans and Britons are amused by each other's table manners. Americans eat with the fork in the right hand, while the British tackle the matter with knife in right hand and fork in left. The Englishman likes meat, vegetables, sauces, and gravies all combined on one plate. He then puts a small mound of salt on the side, assembles on his fork a portion of each of the foods on the plate, adds a little salt from the mound,



# London

## Beginning of the 19th Century



## Beginning of the 20th Century



Compared with New York (chart 3), London's lay-out mostly grew up as need arose.

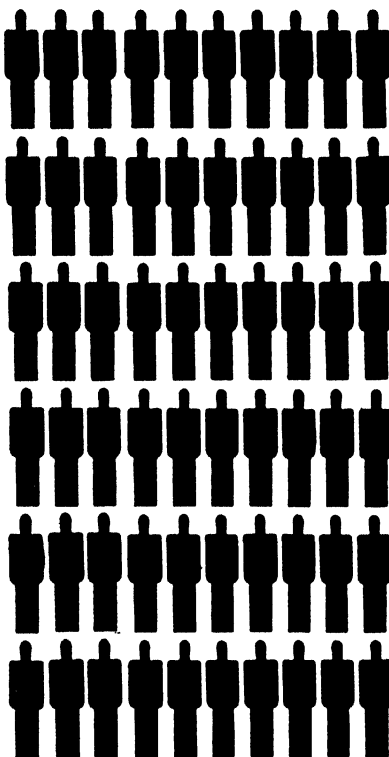
# Urbanization of the Population

United States

1850

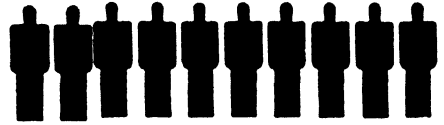
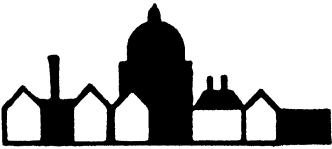


1930

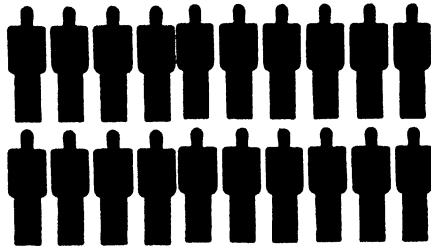
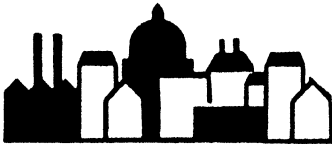


# Great Britain

1850



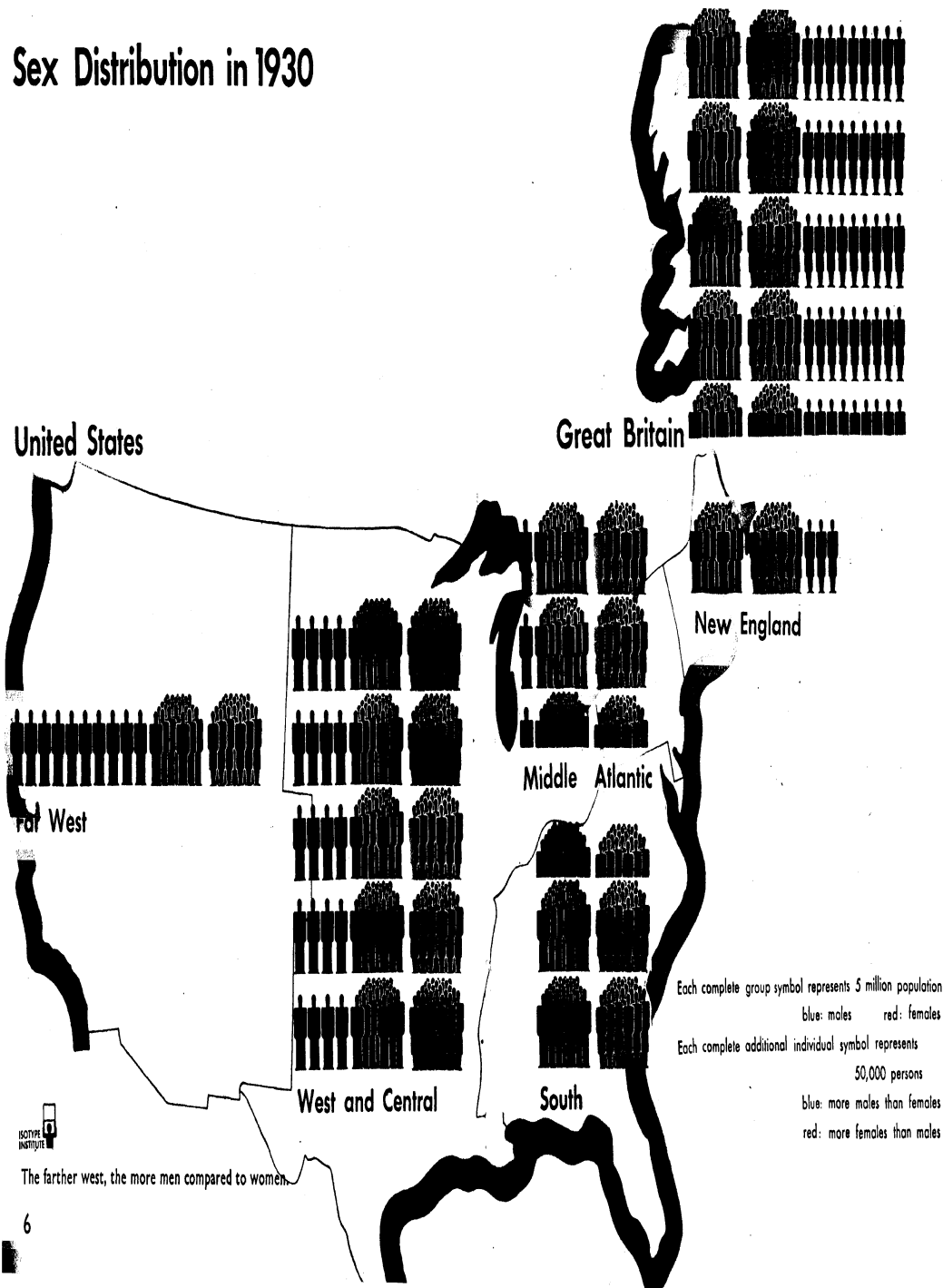
1930



Each row of symbols represents 20 million population  
red: in cities of 100,000 inhabitants and more



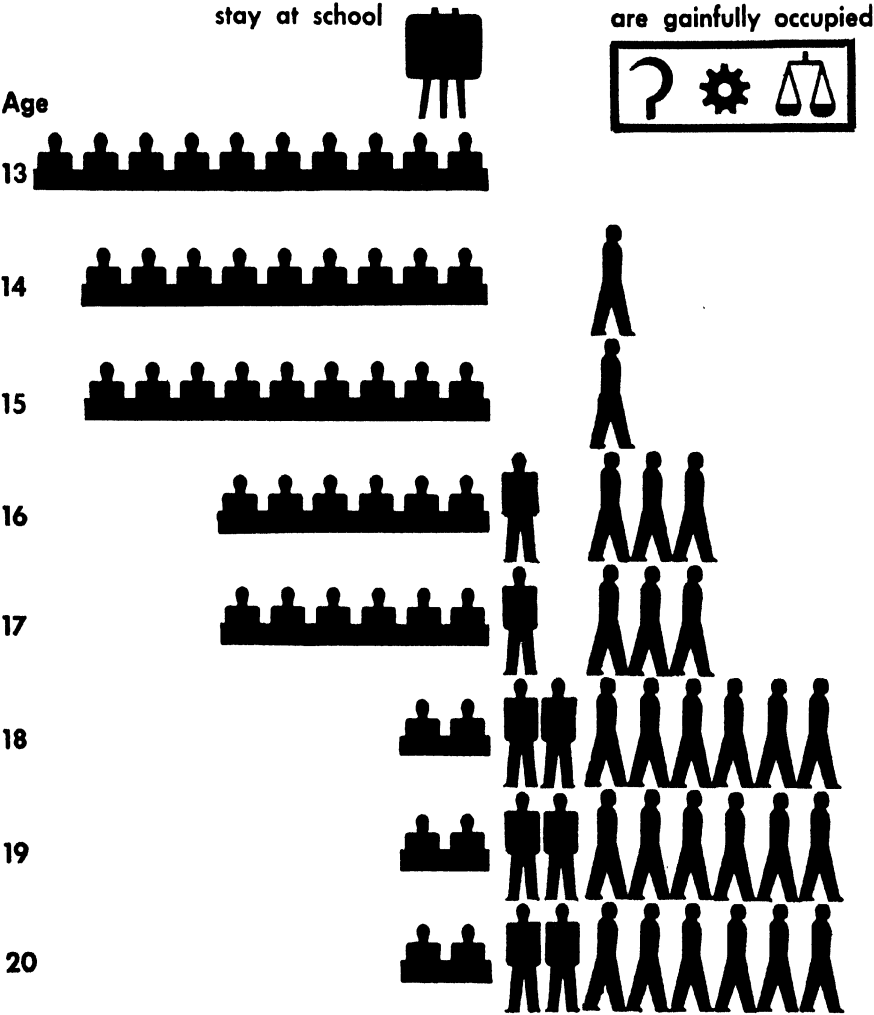
# Sex Distribution in 1930



# The Young Population aged 13-20

## United States

How many out of ten in each age group

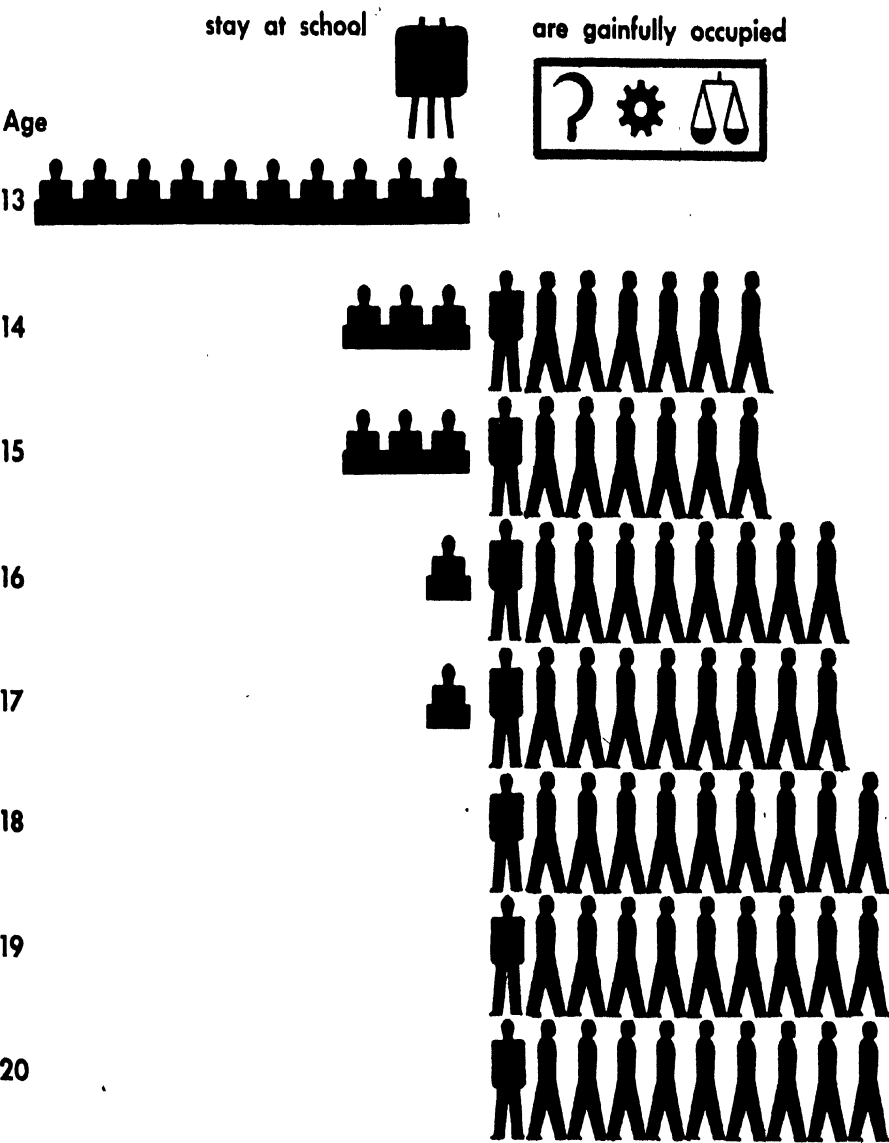


blue: at school    red: gainfully occupied    grey: others    about 1930

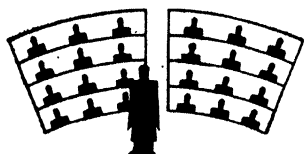
Starting at age thirteen and comparing the next age groups 14 to 15, 16 to 17, and 18 to 20, the proportion going to work for money in both countries steps up, while the proportion

# Great Britain

How many out of ten in each age group

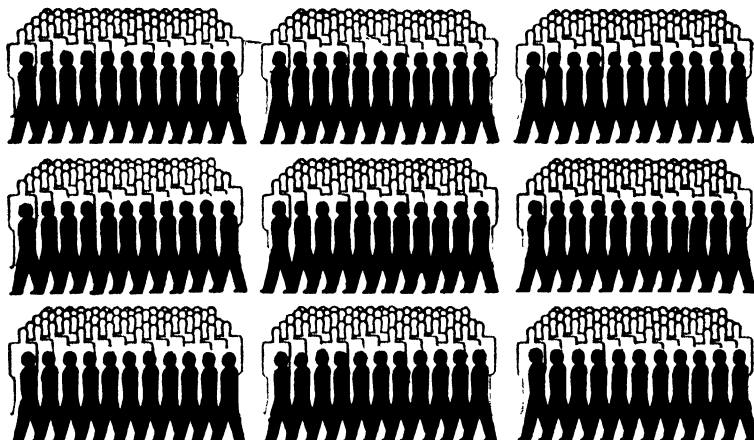


at school or college steps down. But at the age 14 to 15 the stepping is much greater in Britain, and less than 10 per cent. continue education after seventeen.

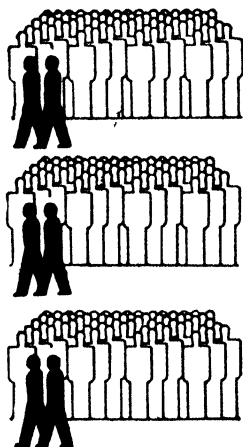


# University Students and Population aged 20-23

## United States



## Great Britain



Each blue symbol represents 10,000 university students in 1932

Each grey group represents 1 million population aged 20-23 years



and eats. The American has his vegetables served in small vegetable dishes arrayed round his plate. If he wants extra salt he sprinkles it over the food. It is paradoxical that the American, who keeps everything separate and takes a mouthful first of this and then of that, mixes the kinds of food at any one meal far more than the Briton. Dutch or cottage cheese, made from sour milk, is likely to appear with the main course, and so is jelly or any sweet relish. He likes ham and pineapple cooked together, and a stack of hot pancakes swimming in butter and maple syrup and topped with crisp bacon or pork sausage-meat—a taste which is incomprehensible to the English.

In Britain it is not considered impolite if you begin to eat before all have been served. In America it is polite to wait until every one is served, even though your food gets cold in the meantime. Americans have developed the habit of smoking between courses as well as after a meal, so ash-trays are part of the table furnishings. British sweets are more often hot than cold; it's the other way round in America, where even fruit-pies are always served cold. Britons take their coffee (or tea) at the end of their dinner. Americans often prefer coffee with their meal.

When, after the war, we have more chance of sitting down at each other's tables, the foods which seem odd to us now and the table manners which make us both giggle will become commonplace. I'm looking forward to a far wider social exchange between Britain and America which will enrich us both. I'd like to get in on the ground floor with an invitation to all my British friends (including those I'm trying to get acquainted with as I write) to come and have a meal with me in my hometown. R.S.V.P. to the publisher !

## MEET THE HOME-TOWN FAMILY

People who in adult life migrate to large cities like London and New York are seldom completely assimilated. They always think of the place they have come from as "back home," or "my home town." Big cities are so impersonal—there's no corner drug-store where you're sure to meet your friends if you drop in, no village pub where familiar faces poise in friendly silence over mugs of beer, or concentrate with quiet intensity on the dart-board. Cities are full of strangers; they are the loneleiest spots in the world. There's no Main Street or High Street with their rows of well-known little shops which end abruptly where the houses begin.

In the blackout one winter, as I was crossing Berkeley Square, that green heart of fashionable Mayfair, I was hailed by a rich Southern voice. "Say," said the American soldier, "can you tell me where Main Street is?" I asked him which Main Street he was looking for, and whether Piccadilly would do. "I don't care," he replied. "I just want Main Street, where there'll be some people. This here looks to me like the backside of town!"

A young couple who had been born and bred in New York City noticed that nearly all their friends kept referring to things that happened "back home." They decided it would be pleasant to have a home town of their own, and picked a little place in Indiana. They subscribed to the local papers, and gradually came to know the town well, though they had never been there. Next summer they decided to spend their



vacation in their "home town" and on arriving called on the newspaper editor, who printed their story in his paper. For ten days they were showered with invitations to parties and picnics to get acquainted with the home-town folk. They had such a good time that they have been back every summer.

I think the residential sections of American towns are more pleasant than most of the streets in British towns. So often the avenues are lined with trees, and there is a unity about the whole street, on account of the absence of walls and hedges, which British streets lack. There are not many towns in either country which do not have their black spots—a row of dreary slums in Britain, the ramshackle dwellings on the wrong side of the railroad-track in America. But the middle run of American homes have a graciousness about them which British villas lack.

In general, American cities are laid out in more orderly fashion than British cities, as a glance at the maps of New York and London will reveal. In New York the avenues run up and down, the streets across, the narrow peninsula which is Manhattan. Both streets and avenues are numbered, and the numbers of houses or buildings rise by a hundred in each block, which makes it remarkably easy to find one's way. Broadway alone breaks the rule among the main thoroughfares, and cuts across diagonally. The spider-web of London streets is confusing to the stranger, but its twisting, narrow lanes and unexpected little alleys off the main thoroughfares are a delight to visitors. Americans are intrigued by such names as Petticoat Lane and Threadneedle Street.

Family life in both countries has got considerably telescoped during the past decade. Gone are the Victorian families of eight or ten offspring provided, in the bourgeois or professional classes, with separate nursery quarters where the children lived and learned under the tutelage of Nanny and a governess flanked by a small regiment of nursemaids and domestic servants. The multiple family of similar status in America, except in the South, was seldom as elaborately catered for. It was more of a co-operative undertaking, with the older children helping the younger and each, from an early age, taking some share in the duties of the household. Americans have always had a tremendous respect for labour, and they work on the theory that every child ought to learn independence and self-reliance from an early age. It is not at all unusual for boys to earn their pocket-money by delivering papers or working in the grocery store on Saturdays, even when their parents could well afford to give them more than they earn. Parents reckon that children appreciate the value of money more if they earn it, and of services if they wait on themselves and each other. In America the English type of nursery is known only in the homes of the very well-to-do, who make up, as in Britain, only a small proportion of the population. But the woman of moderate income in America would certainly not have a nurse for her children, while the woman with a like income in Britain probably would.

The birth-rate in both countries has fallen conspicuously in the last decade. In America large families among the Negroes and the poor whites of the non-industrial South help to keep it a depressed area. One thing that must always be remembered in considering America is this very great poverty concentrated in a few states, which tends to distort the value of any statistics based on the whole of the country. The romantic glamour which clothed the South before the Civil War, when the families of rich plantation-owners enjoyed lives of leisure and elegance while black men

toiled in cotton-fields, lingers on in popular fancy. In truth, many whites as well as Negroes live in deeper poverty in the South than in any other part of the United States or any equivalent part of Britain.

My British friends will agree, and most of my American friends will be annoyed with me, when I say that the American child is a perfect pest. I was one of the pests myself. I don't know why American children seem a greater nuisance to adults than British children. It may be because they live so completely as part of the family unit, and are not segregated in nurseries or sent away early to school as in Britain. But of course this is true only of the upper or professional classes in Britain ; the vast majority grow up in the family circle as they do in America. Perhaps American offspring are encouraged by their parents to be more precocious. Certainly they seem to prefer to be with grown-ups, and to listen even if they don't answer back—which they often do. Even when separate playrooms are provided they are not much used.

American parents tend to make friends and confidants of their children at an early age ; they are more willing to forego filial respect and reverence than British parents. Young people 'rag' their elders and argue with them in a way that would startle both children and parents in Britain. The more formal and respectful relationship between the grown-up son and the governor is not so often met with in America. Dr Margaret Meade, in a broadcast, described parental attitudes in the two countries. The British mother, she said, would admonish her small son to keep quiet and hear what his father had to say ; the American mother would say, "Be quiet, Daddy, and listen to what Junior wants to tell you." "What beats me," an English friend commented, "is how such infernal nuisances can grow up into such pleasant and agreeable adults." He went on to say that young Americans in their teens seemed to have more poise and *savoir-faire* than his own countrymen. Perhaps it is because they have had more experience in adult living and less of sex segregation.

He thought also that American parents were more patient and tolerant with children than the British. Well, I don't think there is much in it. Americans are more quick-tempered, less easy-going. But they are almost pathetically anxious to do well by their children over and above providing a sound physical environment. On the whole, American parents adopt the more modern attitude of laying emphasis on what they owe their children rather than on what their children owe them. There is not the same tendency as among the British working classes to regard children as bread-winners who will help out with the family income as soon as they can begin to earn. Naturally this attitude is linked with economic circumstances, and the higher standard of living in America makes the need for children's earnings less pressing, while the later school-leaving age postpones the earning period. Many British parents who themselves had to leave school at fourteen long for a better opportunity for their children than they enjoyed, and make a real sacrifice to pay secondary school fees. For, as with American parents, anxiety to do well by their children lies deep in their hearts. Education is easier to acquire in America, which makes things less difficult for parents. The new Education Bill recently drawn up by the President of the Board of Education proposes to abolish fees in secondary schools maintained by local education authorities, which will ease the position for British parents too.



American towns of recent growth have been laid out with wide streets to accommodate automobiles. This is Clarion, Iowa (in the Middle West), with a population of about three thousand, serving a rich agricultural district. Nearly every one seems to have a car.

Marriage in America is much more a fifty-fifty co-operative undertaking than it is in Britain, where the attitude of men towards women is far more dominating. A large number of British working-class wives do not know how much their husbands earn. I had occasion, while helping in a clinic, to ask this question of hundreds of women. Their usual reply was, "He gives me so much." A survey made in Kingstanding Housing Estate, in Birmingham, just before the war corroborated this, and showed also the widespread anxiety of husbands to conceal any rise in wages or additional bonus that might come their way. I think the working husband who hands over his pay envelope at the end of the week is an exception rather than the rule. Nor do women in the well-to-do classes know what their husbands' incomes are, either. After a battle (which I won) at our English bank over some business connected with our joint banking account the manager came round to apologize for the trouble I had been put to. "Your case is unique," he said. "Every other man who deposits at this bank doesn't want his wife to know how much he has. So you see we have to be very careful."

Marriage from every point of view is regarded in America much more as a partnership. Everything, from budgeting the family income to buying the car is likely to be discussed together, and as the children grow older they are quite apt to take part in the family council.

During the last decade especially, the idea has become more and more widely accepted in America that some preparation for marriage should be regarded as an important



Amersham, Buckinghamshire, with its quaint market hall and old-world buildings, is in sharp contrast to the unmellowed newness of Clarion. It has a population of about six thousand. A feature common to both countries is the "Stop-me-and-buy-one" man.

facet of education. Some 250 colleges and universities have introduced a course on marriage preparation. Young people attend these classes with the same spirit of inquiry that they carry to their history or physics classes.

Part of the course is given to mixed groups and part to separate classes of men and women. The curriculum includes discussion of courtship, engagement, finances, marriage adjustment, conception, and pregnancy. Both men and women receive instruction in infant care. In America it is not considered odd, but natural, that men should be interested in learning as much as can be taught them about becoming successful husbands.

British young people would welcome such courses too, as I found when I spoke to an audience of undergraduates in a provincial university. In their enthusiasm they determined to approach the university authorities to see what could be done about it. But they were instantly and completely squashed by their elders, who preferred ignorance to enlightenment for the young. Much more time and care is spent at school in teaching a boy how to hold his cricket bat than in preparing him for the most important job of his life.

It will be interesting to see whether, when serious preparation for marriage becomes universal in America, there is any drop in the divorce rate. At present it is high—much higher than in Britain. The divorce rate does not necessarily measure the relative happiness of marriages in the two countries. It would give a truer picture to say that marriages which have failed are dissolved in a country where divorce is



Easter and cherry-blossom time in Washington usually coincide, and provide the occasion for the annual Easter Egg Roll on the White House lawn. It's all very informal. Guests bring their own lunches and picnic in full view of the main entrance.

relatively easy, and marriages which have failed are not dissolved in a country where divorce is costly and troublesome. Perhaps the high cost is one reason for the lower divorce rate in England; another reason may be the greater degree of economic dependence on the part of women, which makes marriage a question of bread and butter.

The American woman is more sure of herself, and finds it easier to earn her own living if she makes a failure of her marriage. As Dorothy Thompson has pointed out, "Where women own as large a proportion of the wealth as they do here, they don't stay married for purely economic reasons."

I once had occasion to interview three hundred English working women in their own homes, and most of them talked to me with great frankness about their married life, usually with the tearful comment, "I've never mentioned this to anyone before." I found my task sadly illuminating, and I got the impression that there is much more unhappiness in married life than appears in statistics. British young people



Garden parties, despite the uncertainty of the weather, are a delightful feature of English life. This party in the garden of 10 Downing Street was for overseas visitors. The men were able to produce a surprising number of grey toppers.

need instruction in the art of happy marriage quite as much as the Americans. But perhaps the British are just people of more equable temperament—more tolerant and more obliging. It may be that they have the faculty of living more happily together than the Americans.

America shows a greater frankness in relationship between men and women than is usual in Britain. The other evening we were entertaining two American airmen who had just arrived in England. They had hardly introduced themselves before one began to talk about his bride, whom he had married shortly before leaving the States. He produced a leather folder containing two photographs to show us, "There she is—my pride and joy," he said. The other lad introduced us to his Betty. All he was thinking about, he said, was to get the war over, so that he could go back and marry his girl. All the evening the two girls popped into the conversation; the boys were full of what the girls would say or think about this and that. Most English young men I have known would have been ashamed to show such unabashed candour.



A game of bridge at a country club in the Middle West absorbs the attention of American housewives. American women gad about more than British women, and belong to clubs which provide tennis, cards, and culture.

American men are used to, and enjoy, the companionship of women ; it is a perfectly natural attitude.

As they grow up American boys and girls have more freedom than is granted most children in Britain, and they become more independent in consequence. They often go away during the summer vacation to work in another city or on a farm, and they jump at the chance of travelling to some unfamiliar place whenever it offers. Except in the upper classes, British young people are more closely tied to the family circle. One of the greatest war difficulties besetting the Ministry of Labour has been the reluctance of young people to leave their homes and go to work in a strange city. Often it is parents rather than sons and daughters who most strongly resist.

There is another important difference in home life between America and Britain. In America equal weight is given to opportunities for girls and boys, both for their full development at home and in their education. It is not the girl only, as is so generally the case in Britain, who, when she comes home from school or work, is expected to help Mother with the housework. The boys take their share. If it is a struggle to send both sons and daughters to college the girls are not just dropped, as in England, while everything is concentrated on the boys. Indeed, it is likely to be the other way round, on the ground that boys can more easily earn their way through college than girls.

From the time a young couple are engaged in America until they've said good-bye to their wedding-guests, every one makes a good deal of fuss over them. For weeks before the wedding it is the custom of the bride's friends to give her 'showers' ; she



There's always a bald head to decorate the windows of London's famous clubs. Members discuss politics or Stock Exchange prices, or sometimes just sit and think. The oldest and most exclusive clubs are for men only.

is guest of honour from house to house, each time receiving presents for the new home. It may be a kitchen shower, or a linen shower, or a silver shower, but in each case friends bring the appropriate gift.

Home weddings are more popular than church affairs. This often surprises English folk, who are accustomed to the rule that you must get married either in a church or a registry office. A church wedding in England seems to me a more serious and sober affair than the American home wedding, even though it is followed, as so often happens, by a lunch or reception in a hotel or some public assembly room. The religious atmosphere predominates, while in America the intimate atmosphere of the home makes the wedding more of a social occasion. The active part taken by family and friends of the bride and groom in preparing for the festivities—cooking the food that will be served, decorating the house, buzzing about for days in advance—emphasizes the social character of the event. The ceremony usually takes place in the evening, and from the arrival of the first guests the house is filled with laughter and chatter. At the appointed hour a friend strikes up a wedding march on the piano, and all eyes are fixed on the staircase as the bride and groom (often walking together) advance with their attendants. The custom of a bride being given away by a male relative is not so universal in America as in Britain. Sometimes a small child acts as the ring-bearer (the function of the best man in England), but bridesmaids are young ladies and never children, as they often are in Britain. After the ceremony there is more gaiety, and every one moves into the dining-room to watch the bride cut the wedding-cake, usually made at home by her mother.

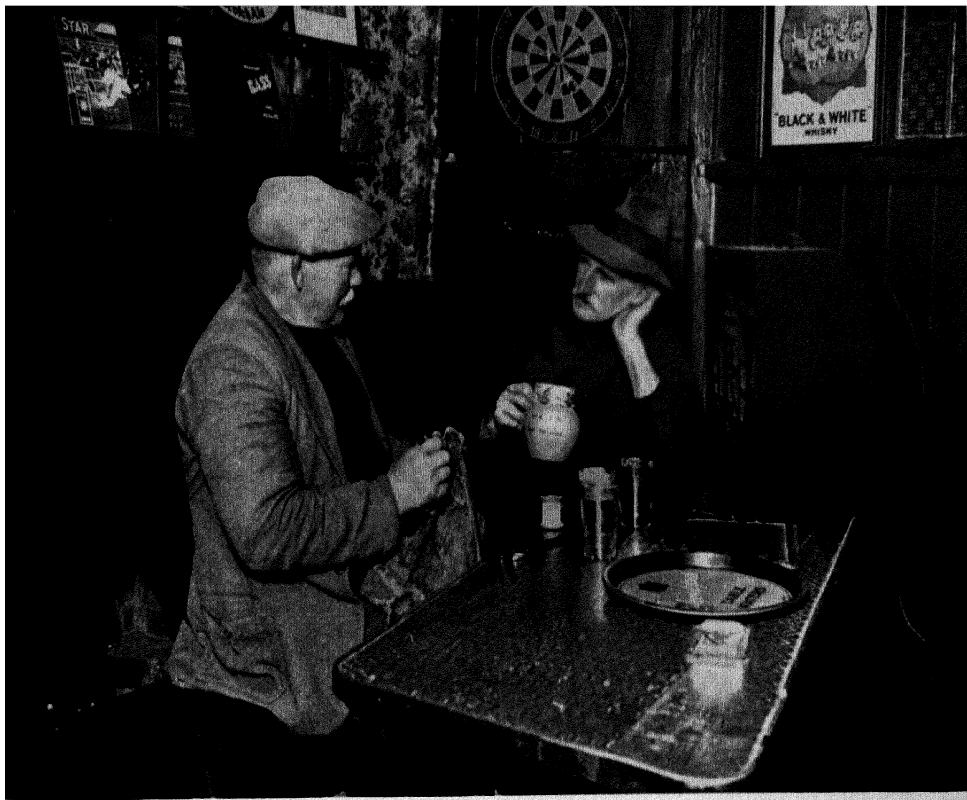




This is a rather glorified version of the corner drug-store. Every day, all over the country, millions of Americans drop into drug-stores for lunch, a snack, or just Coca-Cola or ice-cream soda. It's the nearest equivalent to the British pub.

Courting habits differ a good deal. Americans do not speak of courting or walking out. They say "John is going with Mary," or "Mary is going with John," to describe the special attentions being paid by a young man to a certain girl. It is not assumed that an engagement will follow, though, of course it may. There is far more freedom and companionship between boys and girls in America than in Britain. Most of them, of course, attend co-educational schools and colleges, which makes for more natural friendliness. If a young man pops the question and his girl accepts him the couple consider themselves engaged from that moment on. In England there seems to be an intermediate period; there has to be some tangible evidence, like the presentation of an engagement ring or an announcement in the Press, before the couple are officially engaged. To an American the statement of an English girl that she and her young man are "thinking of becoming engaged" seems very odd.

The custom of deferring the engagement until the young man has secured the consent of the girl's father is not common in America. The young couple are much more likely to make the decision themselves and announce their engagement as a settled

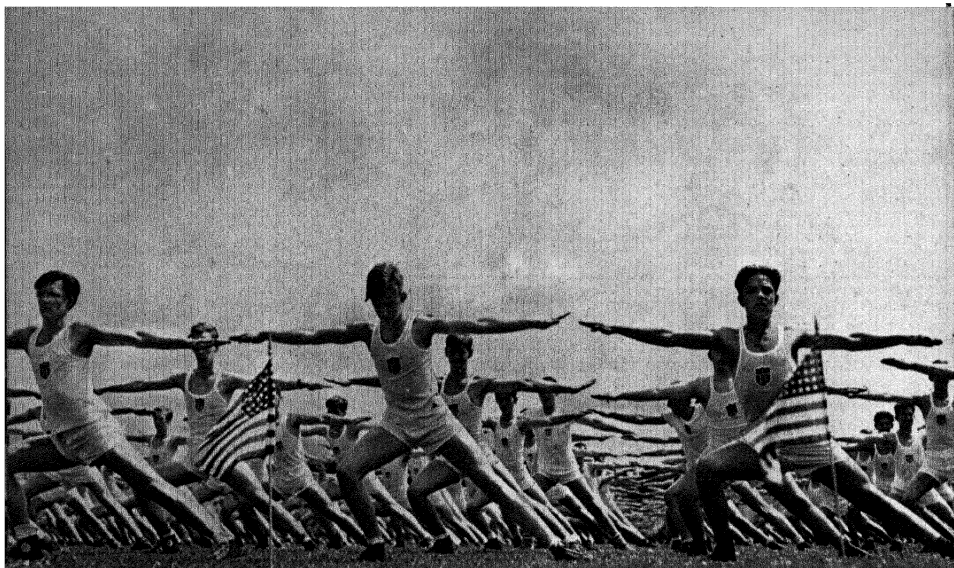


What would Britain be without its Bells and Bulls, those friendly pubs in every town and village? A glass of beer, a game of darts, or maybe the Prime Minister's speeches over the radio. You can even take your knitting if you want to.

fact. A man may invite any number of girl friends to his parents' home without any special significance attaching to the invitation. In England, I gather, a young woman invited to the home of a boy friend (at least, among the working classes) can pretty well be certain that his intentions are serious.

Since there have always been more men than women in America, there is a greater likelihood of a girl finding a mate than in Britain, where there is a surplus of women and where, in the upper classes at least, there appears to be a tendency on the part of men to remain carefree bachelors.

Women, both British and American, have a struggle to achieve equal pay with men, but the gap isn't quite so wide in the United States. It has been laid down that women taking men's places in war work should receive the same rates of pay. In Britain women in the engineering trades have achieved a triumph, for the Amalgamated Engineering Union has for the first time opened its doors to them, and declared for the principle of equal pay. Women in the auxiliary services in America are better off than British women. They get the



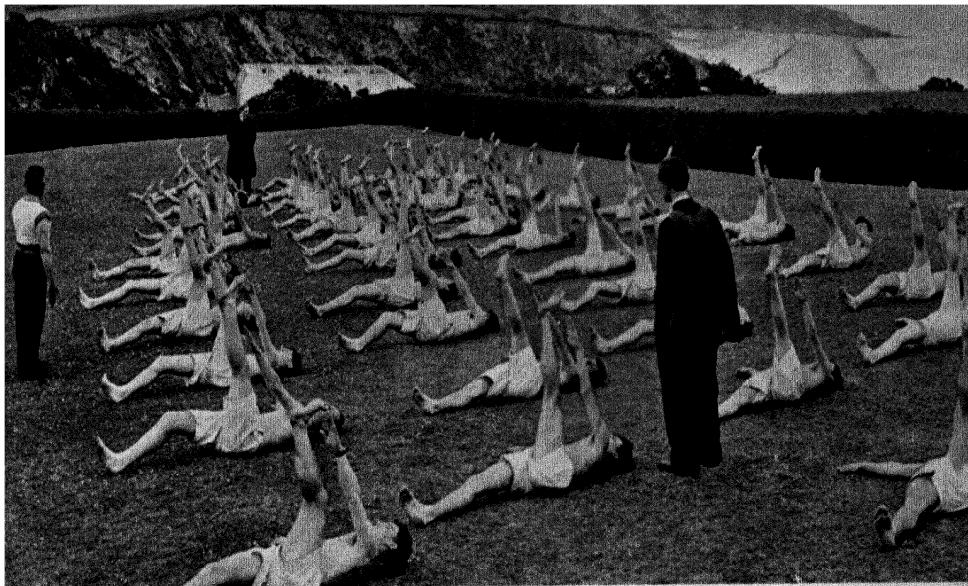
Chicago schoolboys concentrate on achieving perfection in their gymnastics. Each boy wears a small shield inscribed "Health," presumably to remind him of the purpose of his exercises.

same pay as men of the same rank in the services, while British women get only two-thirds of the pay of soldiers, sailors, or airmen.

Englishmen who have been to America sometimes tend to shake their heads dolefully over the important place women occupy in American life. American women, they say, are free and independent and exercise as much authority in the home as the husband, and yet they expect—and get—all the chivalrous attention which Englishmen seem to feel is inappropriate except for the clinging vine. Maybe Americans are more sentimental by nature than the British. Men like to behave chivalrously and women appreciate it. Everybody's pleased, so why worry?

For their part, American women hold strong views about keeping themselves attractive and alert companions for their husbands. The stupidity of hoping to keep your husband's love if you appear in a slovenly wrapper and curlers at the breakfast-table is dinned into daughters of every succeeding generation. The mother of a family, doing her own work and looking after her children unaided, still considers it important to keep herself well groomed. She spends considerable money on cosmetics, but no matter what she does she seldom manages to acquire the lovely peaches-and-cream complexion of British girls. She does have the advantage over British women in being able to buy smart, inexpensive clothes. I have always found that you could eat and dress more cheaply in America; but rents, and all sorts of personal service involving labour costs, are considerably more expensive.

The informality which marks human relationships in America makes for a greater degree of familiarity. "When every one is somebodee, then no one's anybody";



British public schoolboys, evacuated to Cornwall, touch their toes amid picturesque scenery under the direction of their brawny gym instructor. Schoolmasters look on with approval

every one is just plain Mr or Mrs or Miss, and even these handles are dispensed with on short acquaintance, and you become just Jim and Mary. All medical men and dentists are called "Doctor," or, quite likely in a small town, just "Doc." So, too, "Professor" has been robbed of its dignity since it has been adopted by the phrenologist, the quack medicine man, and the circus animal trainer, and since the academic holder of the title can be slapped on the back and addressed as "Prof."

Americans don't stand much on their dignity ("Have they got any dignity to stand on?" asked one of my English friends), and don't feel affronted when the taxi-driver shouts, "Hurry along there, Buddy," or the traffic cop bawls, "Now, where d'ya think y're going? Who d'ya think y'are?" The British working man can address his friend as "mate" or "pal," and the British gentleman can call another "old chap" with the same impunity. But neither seems to want to, much.

Behaviour between men and women which represents just casual friendliness or ordinary politeness in America appears to have a deeper significance in England. An American man will take a woman's arm to escort her over the cross-roads a minute after they have been introduced, and if they get on cordially they'll be walking arm-in-arm before they have gone far. When I slipped my arm quite naturally through that of an undergraduate I was walking with in Cambridge I was astounded to find him blazing like an inarticulate peony when I left him at the corner. As with poking the fire in your British friend's house, which tradition says you mustn't do until you've known her seven years, any gestures of familiarity are postponed to ripe acquaintance. I guess by that time you'll have forgotten about it, anyway.

Badinage flows easily in America, and neither side takes it seriously. A man may say to a new acquaintance, "Say, beautiful, why have I never seen you before?" and she comes back with "I guess, Lothario, it was because you couldn't see through that crowd of dames that follows you around." And they're off on a lot more of the same. If an American soldier says to an American girl he meets in Britain, "Say, honey, I guess I'll marry you and take you home with me," her answer is "O.K. But wait till I tell your buddy I can't marry him after all." If he says it to an English girl (as a good many have, I fear) it's quite a different matter. A lot of girls apparently don't know whether they're engaged or not!

Britons who visit the United States always come home praising above all else the generous quality of American hospitality. It is true that the front door swings open more often to admit friend and stranger alike than in Britain. This tradition of hospitality can be traced back to the early settlers. People in a sparsely populated country sharing dangers and hardships, naturally tend to show hospitality to each other, and to strangers whose advent is a rare and welcome event. And Americans are not as 'choosy' as the British. Perhaps they are more naive, but they don't worry so much about being bored; nor are they much concerned with whether the prospective guest is one of the 'right people.' If you go to America you needn't worry about your credentials. You'll be welcome without any. Perhaps your great-grandfather was hanged for stealing sheep, or shipped off to Australia to pay for his crimes, but that will make you, if anything, more interesting, and you'll be expected to have some good tales to tell. Here is one. An Australian family decided that their maid, who had served them faithfully for many years, ought to have a long holiday. But when they proposed to send her to England she stoutly refused. "What," she exclaimed, "go to that place where all the criminals come from? Never! Never! Never!"

When Americans aren't entertaining strangers they're eating and drinking with one another. Entertainment is on the whole informal, and there are few of those dinner-jacket or white-tie dinners which in peace time were common in England, especially in the larger provincial cities. Before the war some of our English relatives dressed for dinner every night, even though they dined alone, which they usually did. I have never known anyone in America who followed this practice. The American man gets into his dinner-jacket, or tuxedo, far less frequently than the Briton, and there's many a well-to-do American who has never yet worn tails or a top-hat. American women—like women the world over, I guess—like to dress up, and do. They have what they call their formal for dances and large public affairs, but for the rest they wear simple evening things—a long skirt and chiffon blouse or a frilly summer frock. In the summer men wear belts rather than braces (which they call suspenders or galluses), so that they can remove their coats. It is not unusual for a hostess to suggest that they do so before they sit down to dinner.

The ordinary American seems to drink more alcohol since Prohibition than before, especially whisky. It became such a game to defeat the Prohibition laws that many people who had seldom taken alcohol before acquired the taste. At parties they tend to drink before and after the meal, and there may be only ice-water with the food. The cock tail seems to have been an American invention, but it is equally popular in England. Americans in general have not developed a taste for wine nor

the good judgment of British connoisseurs about its qualities. They drink beer, but it is not a national drink as it is in Britain, nor do most Britons think it so good. Perhaps that is because there's no pub to drink it in. America has nothing to correspond with the British public-house where men and women can go together for a friendly pint, except, perhaps, the juke joints that have sprung up in recent years. The nearest American equivalent to the British pub is the drug-store soda-fountain, where soft drinks are served, or the ice-cream parlour. The British pub cannot be compared with the American saloon of pre-Prohibition days. That was a notoriously evil place which no decent woman ever entered. British pubs—most of them at least—are pleasant, if sometimes noisy, social centres as suitable for Grandma as for the menfolk—places where you can sit a long time over a mug of beer, or play a game of darts, or discuss politics, crops, the war and the weather. In a pub the shy Briton can just sit in silence if he wants to, and not feel friendless. There is a good deal of treating among Americans, and they like to exchange gifts too. They seize many an occasion beyond Christmas, birthdays, and wedding anniversaries. On Mothers' Day (which the British are inclined to think is sentimental) sons and daughters send flowers to their mother, and themselves wear a carnation in her honour. Americans may be more sentimental; they are certainly more demonstrative. An American and a British soldier broadcasting in England described the sort of homecoming each would have. The British boy said he would walk into his home, put down his kit, and say, "Hello, Mum," and she would say, "Hello—you've got back." The American boy said that the whole neighbourhood would be on the look-out for him if he was expected, and his mother, when he hove in sight, would rush down the street to meet and embrace him. Every American girl considers herself unlucky if she doesn't have at least one or, perhaps, a dozen valentines on the fourteenth of February. The lace-trimmed love greeting may accompany flowers or candy, or it may just come alone. A hundred years ago the English were more sentimental too, and observed St Valentine's Day, but the custom has largely died out.

All this entertaining and giving takes money, but the average American has more money to spend than the average Briton. Still, America is not, as Hollywood films would have us believe, a country of flashy millionaires and desperate gunmen. Both can be found if you hunt hard enough, but you are not likely to meet either. The bulk of the American population is made up of folk who earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brows just as it is in Britain. It is possible that the American may not toil so long or so hard for his money. The forty-hour week is now the rule in industry, and any hours worked above this are paid for at overtime rates. But the conveyor belt and the rapid tempo in American factories may mean more concentrated work while it lasts than is expected of the Briton.

In 1936 there were only 239 individuals in America with an income of more than half a million dollars a year—roughly £100,000. That was 239 too many, but it is a small percentage of 130 million people. In the same year, 83 Britons, out of a population of 47 million, had the same preposterous yearly income. It is interesting to observe that the proportion holding this great wealth to the total population was almost identically the same in both countries. In America it is easy to make out a list of the wealthy upper crust (which will include some Hollywood stars) and set

down the wealth of each beside their names. In Britain it is not good form to speak about money matters, whether you have much or little, and such a frank document would be hard to come by. Among the tons of bricks I have dropped in England I remember one I hurled among a committee of ladies when I said bluntly that I couldn't afford to take a trip to Turkey. The hushed silence that ensued informed me that I'd done it again. Just the same it can't do any harm to say that 10 per cent. of the British people have about 40 per cent. of the national income, and that goes for America too.

It is very difficult to make statistical comparisons between the distribution of incomes in America and in Britain for the reason that American figures are based largely on family incomes and British entirely on individual incomes. The average annual income per head in America between 1937 and 1939 was about 540 dollars; the average income per head in Britain (plus Northern Ireland) in 1938 was £93, or, at the rate of exchange then prevailing, 455 dollars. But in America incomes have varied more from year to year than in Britain—dropped lower than average during the depression, risen higher in prosperous times. If the poor states of the Old South are omitted, then the standard of living in the average American family will be found to be very considerably higher than in the average family in Britain.

Most of America's great financiers started as poor boys, and amassed their fortunes through their own industry or skill. Andrew Carnegie at the age of twelve was working as a bobbin-boy in a cotton mill. John Jacob Astor arrived in America in the steerage of a ship from London in 1783, with seven German flutes as his only capital. Levi Leiter, a penniless boy who became one of America's great merchants, said at a magnificent dinner he gave to notables from Europe and America, "I suppose you wonder, as I do, at seeing a gnarled little Jewish pedlar being host to a table like this." Theodore Roosevelt, speaking of the Van Roosevelt who arrived about 1649 as a settler, said, "That was the euphemistic name for an immigrant who came over in the steerage of a sailing-ship of the seventeenth century."

The conviction that every child is born with the possibility of acquiring riches or climbing to the pinnacle of the Presidency, no matter who his parents or what his background, still lies deep in the American heart. Indeed, a humble origin is a distinct advantage to any aspiring Presidential candidate. An English friend the other day expressed doubt about this tradition of democracy in America, and drew my attention to the well-to-do family from which Roosevelt sprang, and the substantial house where Wilson was born. In actual fact these are exceptions. Several other Presidents besides Lincoln were born in log cabins; nearly every one of them saw the light of day in a modest cottage or wooden frame house.

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

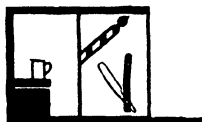
All American school-children can repeat at least these opening lines of Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. They grow to manhood and womanhood believing that every child has an equal start; if some fail to reach their goal that is ill-luck or lack of industry. But Americans see enough self-made men around them to sustain their faith in the perennial hope which American democracy offers to the young.

# Personal Services per 200 Population



**Commercial**

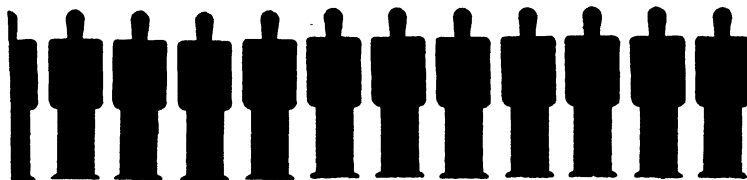
**Private**



**UNITED STATES**



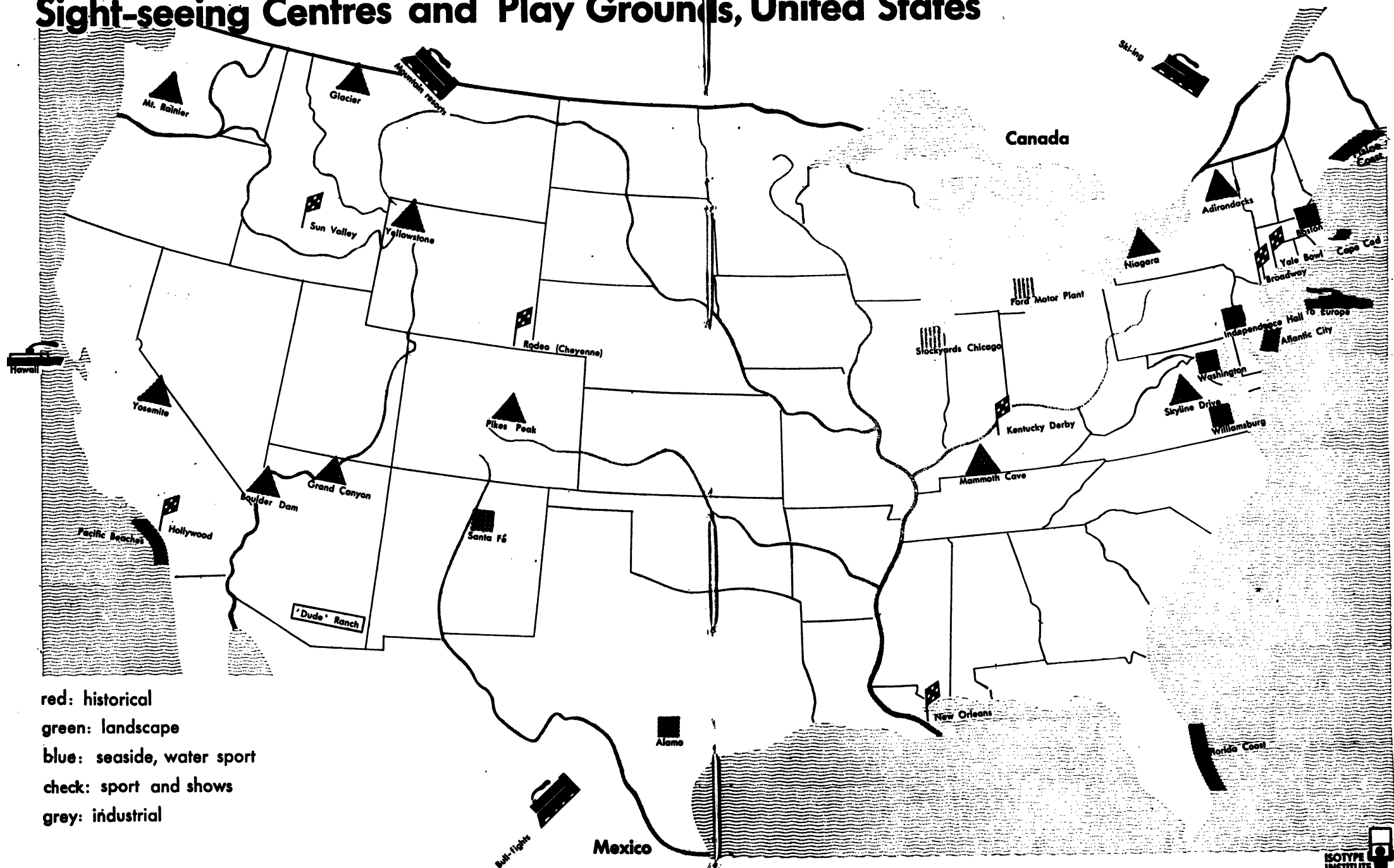
**GREAT BRITAIN**



For every 200 of the population eleven or twelve persons were in 1930 engaged on personal services in Britain, but only seven or eight in America. The difference is least in catering, hairdressing, laundries, and other commercial jobs; greatest in private employment in the home. The proportion of cooks, housemaids, and other domestics to total population is in Britain almost twice the American proportion—as seven to four.



# Sight-seeing Centres and Play Grounds, United States

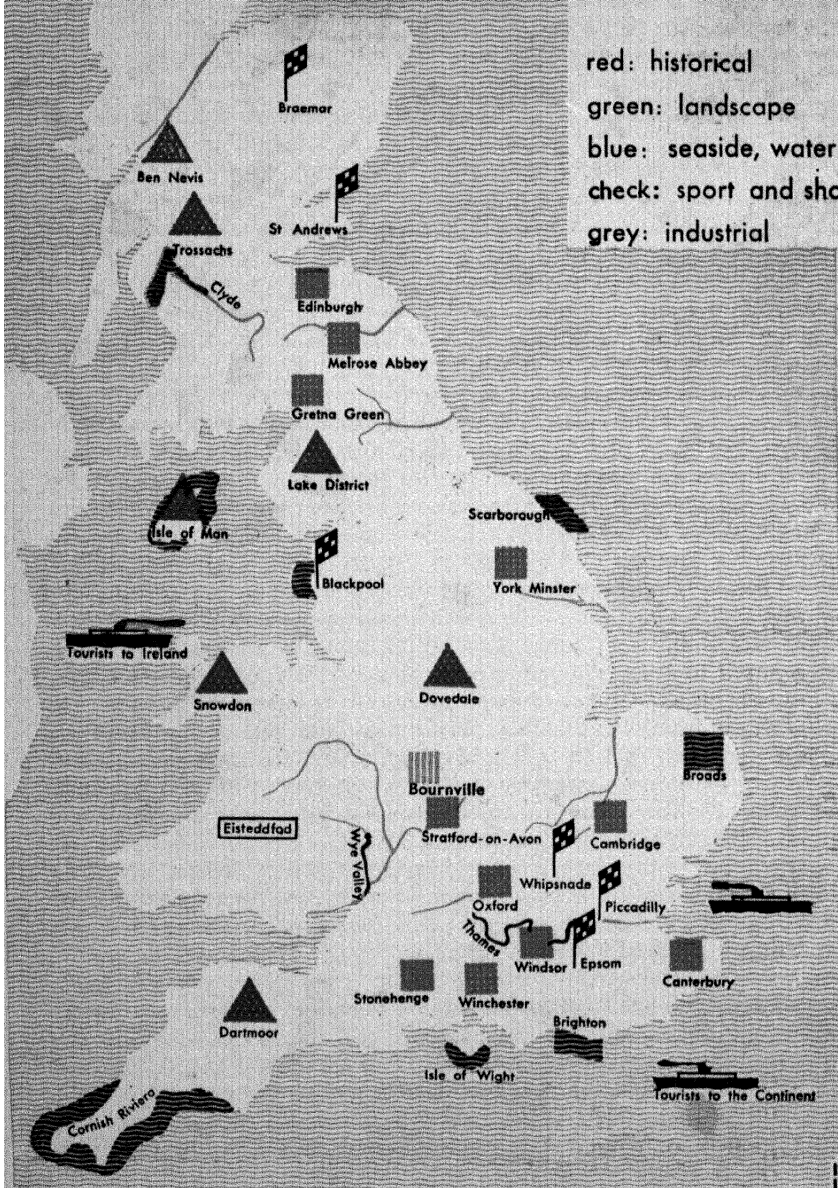


A sample of the more popular resorts. Britons (Chart 11) are offered more choice by history and seascape, Americans by landscape—but some of them have far to go.

# Sight-seeing Centres, Play Grounds

## Great Britain

red: historical  
green: landscape  
blue: seaside, water sport  
check: sport and shows  
grey: industrial



## OFF TO MARKET, SCHOOL, AND CHURCH

Beginning at an early hour every morning, the doors of millions of homes in millions of streets are thrown open, and out stream the workers going off to their daily jobs. Then come the boys and girls noisily bound for school. Lastly, when the workers and children have been got off, and part of the morning housework has been accomplished, the housewives begin to issue forth on their way to the shops (or, in American, stores).

A sample of the thoughts passing through the minds of American and British mothers would read very much alike—what to give the family for dinner and supper, the dress that's got to be let down for Mary (how fast the children do grow!), anxiety about Willy, who doesn't seem to be getting on too well at school, impatience with the slow progress of the toddler at her side when time is so limited and the baby must be got home in time for his next bottle.

Before she started out the housewife washed up the breakfast things (or, as Americans say, did the dishes). The American housewife picked up the sitting-room, and so did the British housewife; only in England she would call it tidying, and in Scotland, sorting.

In the shops the American woman would find a greater variety of fruits and of ready-prepared foods, and in cities at least, she would be able to do all her shopping in one store—meats, fish, flour, fruit, vegetables, milk, butter, cheese, cakes, and bread. In Britain food department-stores are not so often found, and they are usually the more expensive kind, although there are, in localized parts of the country, chain stores which provide a good variety of supplies. I have not seen in Britain the self-serve stores to be found in America. At the door as you go in you appropriate a small trolley fitted with two baskets, which you push round the shop. Everything is displayed on counters within easy reach. You weigh your spinach and oranges, collect your packets of cereals, open the refrigerator (whose door closes automatically after you) to help yourself to milk, butter, or cream cheese. Only at the meat counter do you have to wait for an assistant to weigh your steak or clean your chicken. At the door you pause in front of the cashier, who tots up your bill, checks the weight of your purchases, and puts everything into large paper bags which you have to carry away yourself. If it is Saturday morning or after school-hours you may find small boys waiting outside the shop with their toy handcarts to carry your groceries home for you, earning pocket-money for some coveted toy.

The Co-operative movement which is so widely established in Britain has made little headway in America as yet. A few co-operative stores have been opened, almost entirely on the initiative and with the patronage of the professional classes. In Britain co-operative trading is essentially a movement of and by and for the working people. Almost every town and mining village has its 'Co-op'—sometimes a general store with all departments under one roof, but more often a series of small separate stores. Co-operative stores deal in almost everything from coal to cabbage and drugs to drygoods, although their products are often limited to the brands supplied by the Co-operative Wholesale Societies. The generous dividends on purchases offers a painless method of saving. But Co-operative Societies in Britain are more than just trading associations. They represent a social and educational movement which

has great importance in the lives of the workers, and inspires their loyal support. From a commercial point of view they have been highly successful, with hundreds of factories and an accumulated capital running into over a hundred million pounds.

Americans are fussier about the way food is handled. Bread is wrapped in waxed paper, and meat, butter, and the like are kept in glass counters often equipped with frosted tubes connected with the refrigerating plant. Many shop-windows are also furnished with these tubes, which keep food displays fresh all day. Standards fall somewhat as you move east, and considerably after you cross the Atlantic. I was amazed, when I first came to England, to see meat displayed in open shops exposed to dust and flies, chops delivered uncovered on a tray which a small boy balanced on his head, and unwrapped bread tucked under the baker-boy's arm. But after I had travelled on the Continent nothing surprised me !

Shopping in most American and British towns is a tiring business, however fine the stores. I always dream of a shopping centre laid out in a park, with trees and flower-beds and seats and gay little places along the way for refreshment. It always seems a pity that city parks lie outside the main avenues of daily activities, so that you have to make a special excursion to enjoy them. We make such a gloomy business of our day-by-day tasks. It is a joy to shop in Princes Street, Edinburgh, where the public gardens and enchanting vistas delight the eye ; it is pleasant along Michigan Boulevard, in Chicago, to emerge from a store and see the fresh sweep of Lake Michigan before you. But few cities in either country have the tree-lined boulevards of Paris, with the innumerable pavement cafés where, for the price of a cup of coffee or an *apéritif*, you can rest as long as you like and watch the world go by.

While our housewives have been shopping, the children have been imbibing their national cultures in schools up and down both countries. The majority of children in both go to schools provided by the State. In America these are called public schools, but in Britain it is necessary to speak of elementary or secondary schools because the term 'public schools' perversely refers to private schools. It is not so perverse as many Americans think, however, because 'public' is applied to schools controlled by a governing body which are partly endowed and not run for the headmaster's profit, as are the private preparatory schools. Public schools are attended by the children of the well-to-do. I might almost have said by the boys of the well-to-do, for the number of girls' public schools is relatively small. The emphasis on the education of boys rather than girls is entrenched in the British mind to an astonishing degree.

In Britain lately there has been a marked upsurging of interest in education, and many reforms have been recommended. This agitation has been crystallized in the new Education Act introduced by the President of the Board of Education, which implements some of the changes that have been under discussion.

Both the American and British systems are a little complicated to review in a few words. The most significant difference lies in the social implications of education in the British public and American private school as against State schools, and in the relative proportion attending these non-state schools. Both in Britain and in the United States 90 per cent. of the children are officially reported to be in State or State-aided schools. But the facts are not as similar as the statistics would imply. Fully three-quarters of the American 10 per cent. in private schools are Roman

Catholic children in Church schools. In England these are State-aided, and the children attending them are included among the 90 per cent. in the State schools. Thus, only about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of American children would be in private schools on the English definition. These go either to schools modelled on the English public-school pattern or to schools which were started in order to promote educational experiments. But the private school in America has never acquired any snob value. Until President Roosevelt became so public and popular a figure it is doubtful whether one in ten thousand Americans had ever heard of Groton. Most Americans still couldn't tell you where it is. Is there anyone in England who is not familiar with Eton and Harrow? Attending a private school in America hasn't the slightest effect on students' chances of getting a job, nor does it ensure that they will automatically become leaders and rulers. British public schools quite frankly set out to prepare boys for this function; American private schools do not. And there is not usually a difference in the accent of children going to State and private schools in America. There is a profound difference between these two classes in Britain.

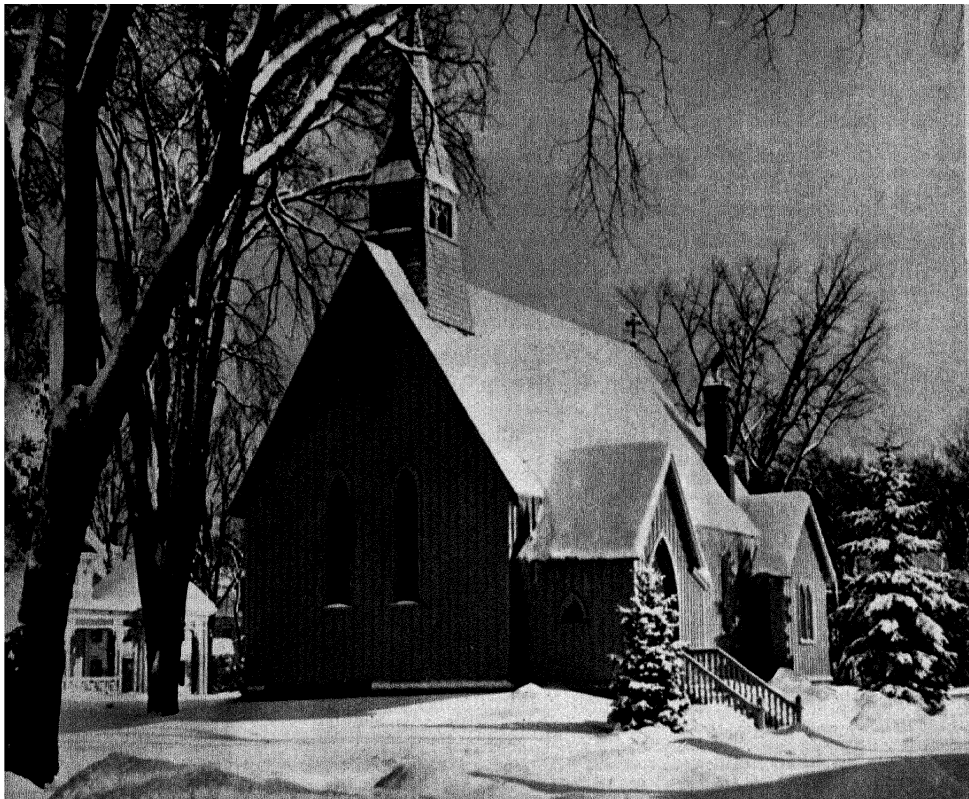
The other most significant differences between the American and British systems lie in the attitude towards the education of girls, in the extent of co-education, and in the continuance of education in America over a longer period of a far greater number of young people.

In America about 10 per cent. of boys and girls aged fourteen and fifteen leave school to go to work and 90 per cent. are still having full-time education; 30 per cent. aged sixteen and seventeen go to paid work and 60 per cent. continue in full-time education, chiefly in State high schools, which are entirely free. The remainder stay at home to help on the farm or with domestic work.

In Britain the record is not so good, though Wales and Scotland are nearer American standards than England. In 1937-38, 25.6 per cent. of children leaving Scottish primary or post-primary schools proceeded to further full-time education, and the equivalent figure for Wales was 30.3 per cent. for boys and 28.8 per cent. for girls. But when England and Wales are taken together only 20.3 per cent. of boys and 18.2 per cent. of girls leaving the public elementary schools continued full-time education. Only about 30 per cent. of all British children, whatever their school, proceed at fourteen to further education. Parents of elementary school-children are usually required to pay fees after this age (the new Education Act will largely remove this disability), but a good many free places are offered in secondary schools, and scholarships can be won to the universities.

The age up to which school attendance is compulsory in America varies from state to state. In forty-three out of the forty-eight states it is sixteen or higher—in New York State it is eighteen. The age in Great Britain is fourteen, but this was about to be raised to fifteen just before the onset of war, and will certainly be raised soon after the war is over. The new Education Act provides that it shall be advanced later to sixteen, and there are plans for compulsory part-time education up to the age of eighteen.

American education comes under the province of state governments. As a result it is very uneven over the whole country. States that are prosperous spend a great deal of money on the most modern buildings and equipment, including cinema and



A white blanket of snow sparkling in the brilliant sunshine softens the austerity of this little New England church, built of wood painted white. It is set in a typical residential street of an American small town.

radio installations ; states that are poor are behind the times. There is now a widespread agitation in the United States to bring education under Federal control to the extent that states needing it would be able to receive subsidies from the national exchequer.

All American State schools are co-educational, and so are most colleges. There are in general two divisions ; primary or grammar grades, which take the child from the age of six, one grade a year, through the first eight years of his educational life ; and the high school, which occupies four years, during which the students are known as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. (The same terms are applied to the four years in college.) In some states the seventh and eighth grades are combined with the first grade in high school under the term 'junior high school.'

In Britain the arrangement is more complicated, both because of the large number of private and preparatory schools, and because of Church schools which are partially but not wholly controlled and financed by the State. (The situation is different in Scotland, where nine-tenths of the schools are publicly provided.) Discussion of



Village churches in Britain are so mellowed by time that they, and their ancient grass-grown tombstones, seem to spring from the earth itself. The sundial measures the passing hours which mark the changing centuries.

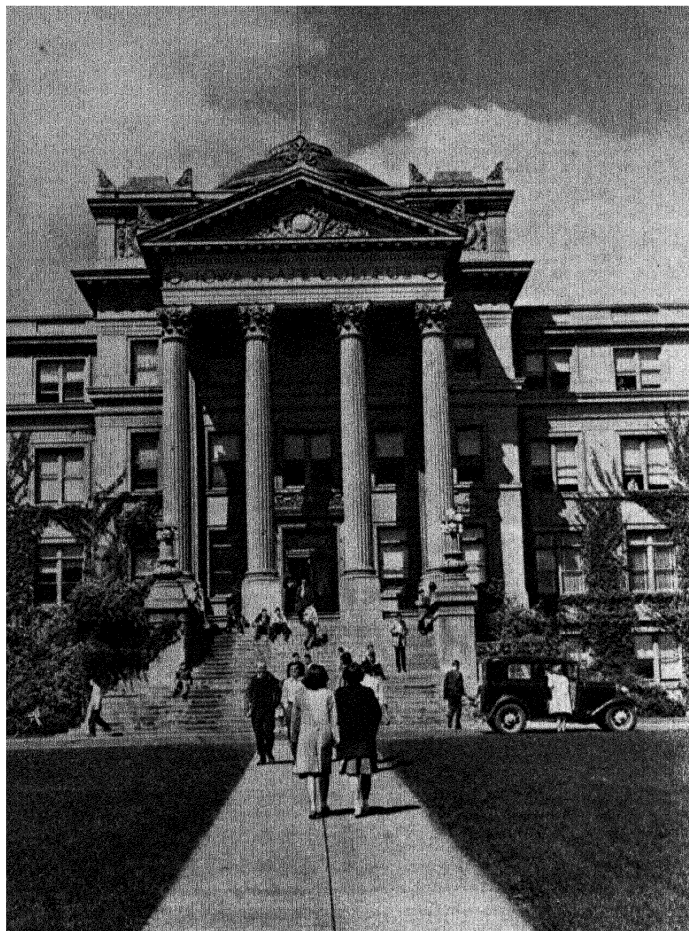
the new Education Act has revealed considerable controversy over the Church schools and also over the question of religious instruction in schools, which is to be made compulsory according to an agreed syllabus.

America is untroubled by these religious controversies. The principle of freedom of worship was laid down by the founders of the Republic, and Americans feel that compulsory religious education in State schools might infringe this freedom. There is therefore no religious education in State schools, and no public funds are spent in support of any religious schools.

The magazine *Time* recently had this to say about Britain's plans for religious teaching in schools :

U.S. parents and churchmen alike had a right to rub their eyes in wonder last week at the news from Britain. In the U.S. almost every state makes it a crime to give sectarian instruction in the public schools, but within a few weeks Parliament will actually make religious instruction and daily worship a statutory requirement for every school.





Iowa State College for Agriculture and Mechanical Arts spreads its grassy campus in the little town of Ames. Founded in 1858, it has nearly eight thousand students—many more than Oxford or Cambridge. Like most American colleges, it is co-educational. Lucky student owns a flivver.

In Britain children receiving state-aided education attend primary or elementary schools between the age of five and eleven. Those going on to secondary schools are transferred at eleven, while those not expecting to continue education after fourteen remain on in elementary schools until they reach the school-leaving age. Under the new Act "the system of public education will be organized as a continuous process conducted in three successive stages—primary, secondary, and further." Nursery schools, of which there were few before the war, are to be included as part of the primary education.

The small proportion of boys who come from families able to pay the fees are usually sent to preparatory boarding-schools (sometimes at as early an age as eight) and afterwards go on to public schools, such as Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and Winchester, these again being boarding-schools. A considerable proportion then enter Oxford or Cambridge. Thus they are segregated in male institutions from the age of eight until twenty-one or twenty-two.

Some British educationists think that America's academic standards are lower than the British. That is quite possible. The tendency in America is to spread education (perhaps more thinly) over a wider section of the population. The contrast between the number of British and of American boys and girls who go on from school to higher education is startling. Rather less than 2 per cent. of the British youth of university age get a college education; more than 10 per cent. of Americans do.

In America emphasis is laid on spreading education as widely as possible, and the



educational aim is to prepare young people to understand the art of living and of cordial human relationships over and above learning to work for a living. In most communities the high school is the chief symbol of 'democracy'—the one common tie of an active cultural nature by which all families feel themselves attached.

It is America's boast that any boy or girl with enough grit and determination can have a college education, and thousands of them do help to pay their way by part-time work during term, such as waiting at table in the college dining-hall, and by taking full-time jobs during the summer vacation. Many a college man works with pick and shovel while universities are closed, and no one loses any social status in the process. In Britain there are not the same opportunities for casual work well enough paid to make such a plan possible, so the only door open to working boys and girls is through scholarships. Since the last war the number of students coming up to the universities on scholarships has been steadily increasing.

American children spend a relatively shorter part of the year in school than British children. The length of school terms varies from state to state. In some of the poverty-stricken states of the South children are kept in school hardly half the year. In most parts of the country summer holidays extend through July and August because of the heat, instead of lasting only a month, as in British State schools.

The graduation ceremonies are called commencement exercises, marking the close of childhood's epoch and the unfolding of another. It is a significant time in the



Henry VIII, who founded Trinity College in the sixteenth century, keeps a vigilant eye on succeeding generations of undergraduates from his niche in the magnificent Great Gate. Trinity, with about seven hundred members, is the largest college in the University of Cambridge.

life of the young, and the whole community joins in celebrating the occasion. The young people are showered with graduating presents. On the Sunday before the final great night a baccalaureate sermon is preached in one of the churches, which is decked with flowers for the occasion.

The commencement exercises are held on a June evening in the largest hall in town, packed with friends and relatives. The graduates sit on the platform, the girls youthful and lovely in white summer dresses, the boys resplendent in new suits. Sometimes the high-school orchestra plays and the glee club sings. But the high spot of the evening is the address from the visiting speaker, who admonishes the young to good works and faith in the future. Then the hard-earned diplomas are presented, and another generation files out to work, to wed, to fail, to achieve. But there is high resolve in every heart.

Prize-giving days occur frequently in British schools when pupils are rewarded for meritorious work. These occasions are of interest chiefly to pupils and their parents ; they do not have the same community significance as commencement day, which marks the culmination of four years of school life. I think every community ought to make public recognition of the coming-of-age of the young. What a fine gesture it would be if each town at intervals of three or four months publicly honoured its boys and girls who had come of age in that period, and ceremoniously impressed upon them the privileges and civic responsibilities of adult citizenship ! Both America and Britain have lately become increasingly aware of the importance of the young, and youth organizations are rapidly multiplying. But I wish that this stage in the life of citizens could be dramatized, made more important with pageantry.

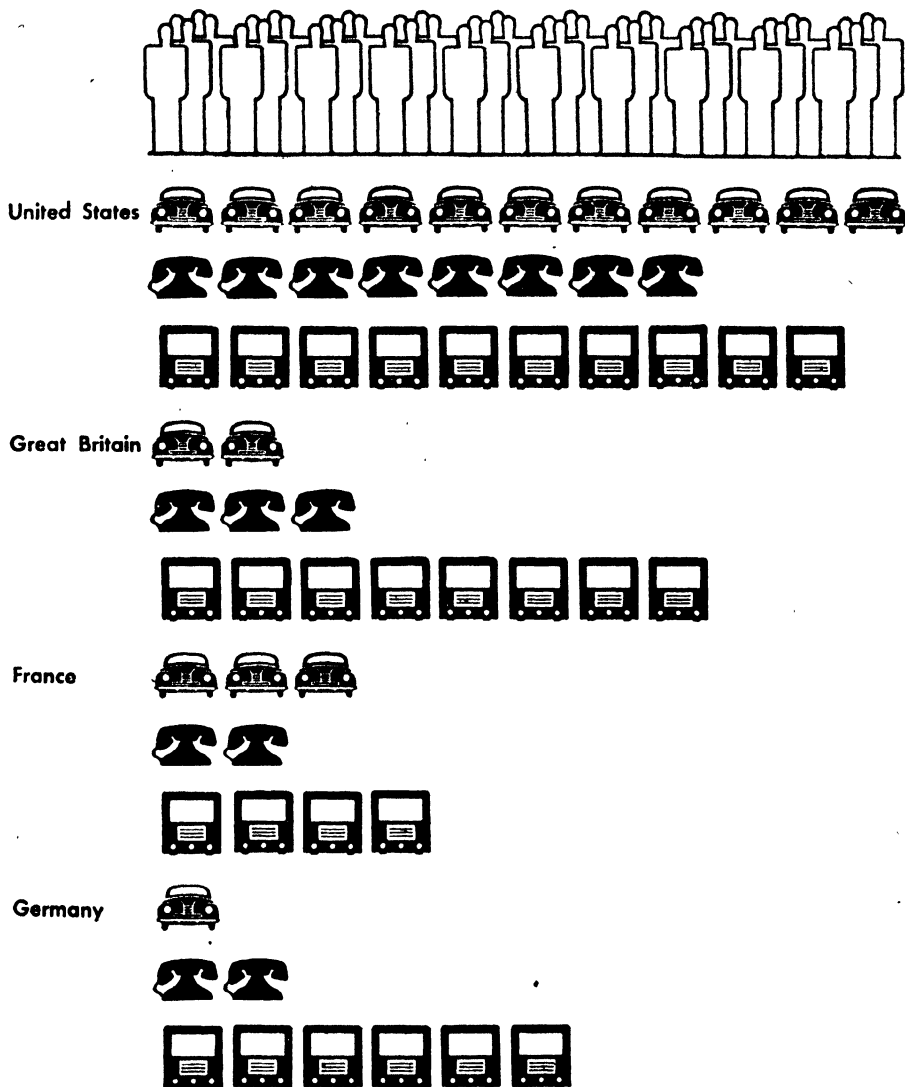
Americans have a natural greed for varied experiences, and they are likely at any given age to have held more different jobs and developed a wider variety of interests than most Britons at a similar age. William O. Douglas, who at forty years of age became a judge of the United States Supreme Court, was a professor of law. But before that he had picked cherries on a Western fruit-ranch, driven a huge wheat-harvesting combine, herded sheep in Montana, given elocution lessons in New York, been a waiter, and done all manner of odd jobs.

I once prefaced a talk I was giving before an English audience by a recital of the various jobs I had held in America at one time or another. When I had finished a middle-aged shoe operator from the Midlands rose to her feet and made a remark which sent the audience into roars of laughter. "Well," she said, "what surprises me is how that lady got all those jobs !"

Though religious teaching is not given in American schools, churches have a prominent place in the life of the community. There is no Established Church in America as there is in Britain. The Church of England, or Episcopalian Church, is one of the smaller denominations, having fewer than two million members as compared with nearly twenty million Roman Catholics and nearly eight and a half million Baptists. It is generally accepted as being the Church of the wealthier classes. Methodists come next in size, followed by the Lutherans and the Jewish congregations, and after them a bewildering multitude of sects and creeds from Seventh-Day Adventists, Mormons or Latter Day Saints, Mennonites, and Orthodox Eastern churches, to the Fire Baptised Holiness Church of America and the Negro followers of Father Divine who accept him as God.









# Motor Cars, Telephones, Radio Sets 1937

## per 50 population



Britain is close to America in radio sets per head, but in motor cars and telephones European countries lag far behind American standards.

# Popular Festivals

Calendar		United States
January		NEW YEAR
February		LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY
March		
April		
May		MOTHERS' DAY MEMORIAL DAY
June		
July		INDEPENDENCE DAY
August		
September		LABOUR DAY
October		HALLOW-E'EN
November		ARMISTICE DAY THANKSGIVING DAY
December		CHRISTMAS DAY






Festivals falling on a Sunday, as Easter Sunday, Whit Sunday, are not included

Blue: church festivals and days after church festivals

Red: commemoration of historical events

Grey: national sporting event

Green: custom or legally appointed

Calendar		England	
January			
February			
March			
April		BOAT RACE (OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE) GOOD FRIDAY EASTER MONDAY	
May		DERBY DAY	WHIT MONDAY
June			
July			
August		BANK HOLIDAY	
September			
October			
November		GUY FAWKES ARMISTICE DAY	
December		CHRISTMAS DAY BOXING DAY	



Both countries celebrate on about as many days throughout the year, but American festivals depend more on historical occurrences and English more on movable Church feasts and sporting events which may, in some years, be in a neighbouring month to that charted. Scots, like Americans, celebrate the New Year and do not follow English Bank Holidays or sporting fixtures. Guy Fawkes Day and Hallow-e'en appeal particularly to the young.

## Tea Consumption

United States

Great Britain

Switzerland

Italy

Each symbol represents one pound

Each row of symbols represents the average annual consumption per head 1930 - 1934



## Coffee Consumption



## Milk Consumption

United States

Great Britain

Switzerland

Italy

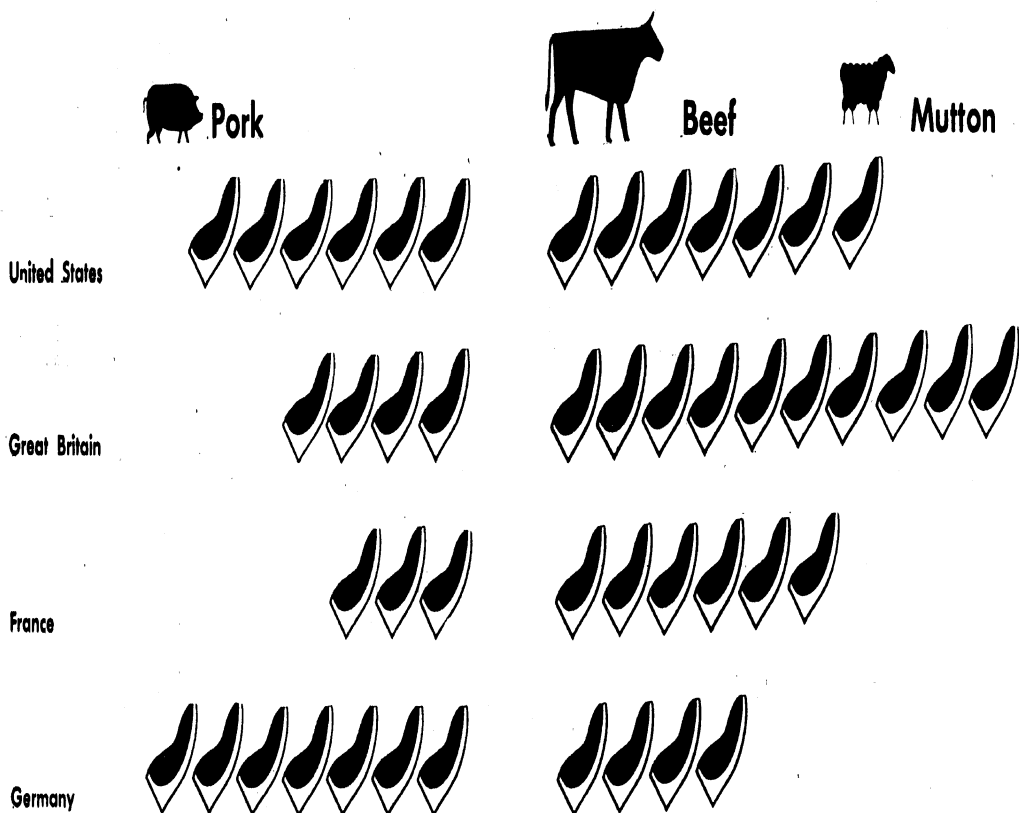
Each blue symbol represents 10 gallons

Each row of symbols represents the average annual consumption per head 1930 - 1934



Here duly charted is a major difference in the private lives of Britons and Americans. Cups represent pounds of tea or of coffee, and since a pound of tea goes farther Britons probably drink more tea than Americans do coffee. As for gallons of milk, Switzerland sets a target for all.

# Meat Consumed per Head

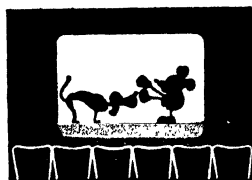


Each symbol represents 10 lbs.

Each row of symbols represents the average annual consumption per head, 1933-1937

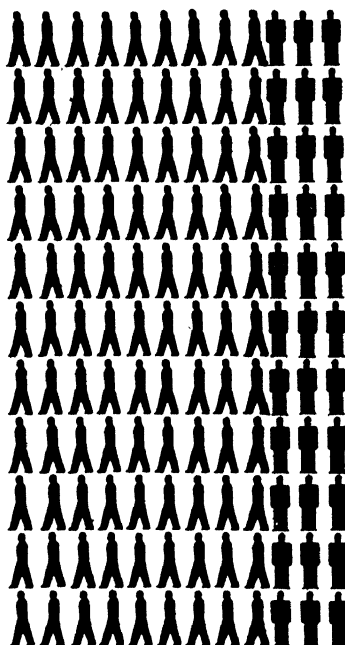
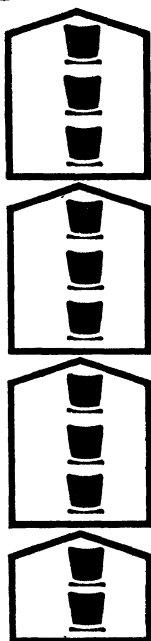


An average Briton eats more meat than an American, a German, or a Frenchman, particularly beef and mutton; but the American comes in a close second. The Anglo-American consumes on a scale well above the Continental European.

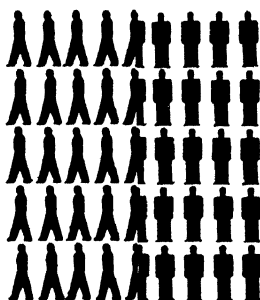


# The Cinemas and Their Weekly Attendance

**United States**



**Great Britain**



Each house represents 5000 cinemas  
(of various average sizes)

Each red symbol within the houses  
represents 1 million seats

Each man symbol represents 1 million population

Each red man symbol represents  
1 million visitors per week  
among the population



There are four cinemas in America to every one in Britain, and a larger proportion of Americans are present. But Britain has more seats per cinema and per population.



Religious observances in America, outside the Roman Catholic Church, have a more spontaneous and less ritualistic character than those of the Church of England. Church members not only attend services on Sunday ; their whole social life revolves round the church, which has something going on all through the week. I was brought up a Baptist, and I remember that even on Sunday there was a great deal of pleasant sociability and handshaking before and after the services, and no stranger was allowed to leave without friendly greetings and as often as not an invitation to go home for Sunday dinner with some one. The choir played an important part, and always sang one or two anthems in addition to leading the congregation in hymns. Unlike the Church of England choirs, which are made up of men and boys only, the alto and soprano parts are always taken by women. American boys and girls from childhood learn to sing part-songs.

Sunday was a busy day, with morning service followed by Sunday school, Junior Baptist Young People's Union in the afternoon, and Senior B.Y.P.U. at six, and then the evening service. Sometimes in the winter, when the snow lay deep on the ground and the temperature hovered round zero, my mother would pack lunch for the entire family, and we would spend the whole day at church. This always delighted me, for other families were certain to do the same, and Sunday lunch became a pleasant picnic.

Fund-raising church suppers when the whole building was filled with the delicious smell of coffee and baked beans, church socials when the young folk managed furtive wooings, lectures, concerts, and entertainments, to say nothing of the gift-laden tree at Christmas-time, provided an endless succession of pleasant occasions, which served to link religion with everyday life. We learned how to organize societies, preside as officers, conduct our affairs according to Parliamentary rules, and become tolerably good public speakers.

There is not much difference in religious observance on either side of the Atlantic so far as the same denomination is concerned. Services in the Episcopal Churches in either country are very similar, and the same is true of the Nonconformist Churches. The chief difference lies in the presence in England and Scotland of Established Churches and the absence of any official Church in America.

To-day churches of all denominations on either side of the Atlantic are uniting in a common purpose as they have never done before. It is a common purpose which links conformist and nonconformist, Gentile and Jew, believer and unbeliever. That purpose is the building of a new world where the common man will be assured of his unalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

## TIME FOR PLAY

When the year rolls round to summer, when the trees unfurl their green and water shimmers under sun's caresses, British and American families with one accord begin to dream of holidays. Just as Londoners on the first warm days pour into Brighton, Margate, or Southend, so New Yorkers swoop down in their thousands on the yellow sands of Coney Island or Jones Beach. There is no lack in either country of lovely playgrounds for holiday-makers. The trouble is to find the time for the holiday

and, especially in America, for the long trip which is sometimes necessary. More Americans own motor-cars (there's one automobile to every four persons), and that helps you to get around if you're an inveterate gadder, as most Americans are. But if you live in New England and decide to visit Yosemite or Glacier National Park you'll have nearly a three thousand mile drive ahead of you. And that's quite a jaunt. Car-owners in Britain (there's one car to twenty persons) can get to almost any chosen spot within a day or so at the most.

The seaside is the traditional and most popular place for a holiday in Britain, which might be expected of a country so near to the sea at every point. America, too, has plenty of coast-line with swimming place for millions along the Atlantic seaboard in the East and the Pacific in the West. But in America there are many people living in the central states a thousand miles or more from either coast who have never seen the ocean. Chicago, in the Middle West, has a beach right in the heart of the city, on Lake Michigan, which is so like the sea that you'd have to taste the water to know the difference. For those who enjoy boats and fishing and swimming there's lots of fun to be had on the Mississippi and the other great rivers which cut through the central parts of America.

If you can bear some astronomical figures it may interest you to know that America has twenty-six national parks covering 10 million acres of ground. Altogether, the federal government owns 21 million acres of land for parks, monuments, recreational areas, parkways, and so on. National forests under Federal administration cover more than 177 million acres. So if you are one of those people who don't go to Blackpool because so many other people do, and yearn to lose yourself so that nobody can find you for months on end, you might try America.

But when the time comes for exchanging visits across the sea it is likely that the British will want to see the sights and go to those holiday centres which the Americans themselves patronize. The Americans will feel the same way about Britain. The British tourist, of course, after a glimpse at the Statue of Liberty must stroll down Broadway in New York, just as every American gravitates to Piccadilly Circus. And he must see the skyscrapers and take an express elevator (or lift) to the roof of the Rockefeller or the Empire State Building. And he musn't miss Niagara Falls. But beyond that there is so much to see that it would take at least a year to cover everything, so you must pick and choose according to your interests. For the historian there is Williamsburg, in Virginia, a show-place rebuilt exactly as it was in Colonial times; Washington, with its Capitol and White House and George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, not far distant; Boston, where the rebels staged their tea-party in the harbour; Philadelphia, with Independence Hall, in which rests the original Independence Bell; Santa Fé, in New Mexico, with its early Indian cliff dwellings and many present-day Indian villages a short motor-ride away. These are only the traveller's sample of places which are visited yearly by millions of Americans.

Perhaps you prefer fun and games, and if you are lucky you might see a football match in the famous Yale Bowl at New Haven, Connecticut, which seats 76,696 people. (I can't think why they didn't squeeze in four more seats). Yale Bowl is only one of the many famous stadiums. Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, with 105,000 seats, is the biggest. You can ski in Sun Valley, Idaho, or lose your dignity

at the New Orleans Mardi Gras, or see cow-punchers ride bucking broncos at the rodeos out West, or put some money on the Kentucky Derby, which is run at Louisville. If you're interested in big business and have a strong stomach I recommend the Chicago stock yards, and after that Ford's magnitudinous motor *ménage* at Detroit. Meanwhile it would be a pity if you missed the beauty of the Grand Canyon, in Arizona, or of Glacier Park, in north-western Montana, with its 250 glacier-fed lakes ; or if you failed to boil an egg in the hot springs of Yellowstone, or to feed the bears which roam about freely.

If, after all this, you feel a little exhausted you might rest up for a bit on a dude ranch out West, so called because the proprietor will receive as a paying guest any dude or tenderfoot who wants to sample the romantic pleasure of mingling with cow-punchers—rather nicely dolled up for the purpose. A dude is a foppishly dressed city guy.

If you really are going to sight-see in America you had better not rely on my random suggestions, for I've only just begun and have got to stop. Apply instead to the United States Travel Bureau run by the Government, with offices in New York and San Francisco. They'll fix you up.

The American visitor to Britain will not have so much ground to cover. But Britain has had more time to make history, and the American tourist will find at every turn mementoes of her rich and colourful past. Almost everything in one way or another commemorates the struggles and the triumphs of millions of men and women who have trod the soil of Britain for more than two thousand years. Castles, abbeys, and cathedrals, of course, are among the first things to see. There are so many that only a sample could get on the map—Edinburgh Castle, where Mary Queen of Scots laid her uneasy head, and Melrose Abbey (in the Sir Walter Scott country), in Scotland ; Windsor Castle perched over the Thames (where the Royal Family spends a good deal of time).

Where shall we begin—or end—on cathedrals ? York, with its superb glass ; Canterbury, where Becket met his gory end (his tomb was the mecca of the Pilgrims—“to Caunturbury they wende,” Americans will recall from their schooldays) ; and Winchester, just to offer a sample. Better drop in to see Winchester College too, and look for the tombstone inscribed : “Here lies Geoffrey De Monteford [I forget the lad's real name], who at the age of sixteen was kicked by a horse, and went to Heaven instead of Oxford.” In London, of course, St Paul's standing proudly in the midst of blitzed ruins, and Westminster Abbey, happily not seriously damaged.

On your way to Scotland you might pause for a moment at Gretna Green, but only a moment, for it's a tawdry little show-place, and romantic elopers no longer get married at the blacksmith's anvil. Every American will make an excursion to Shakespeare's home-town, Stratford-on-Avon, and to Anne Hathaway's cottage a short distance away, where William wooed the lass. Antiquarians will visit Stonehenge, a circle of huge stones on Salisbury Plain, where the ancient Druids gathered to supplicate their gods ; and though Baedeker used to advise travellers that “if pressed for time Cambridge may be omitted,” it would be a pity to miss that university or Oxford either.

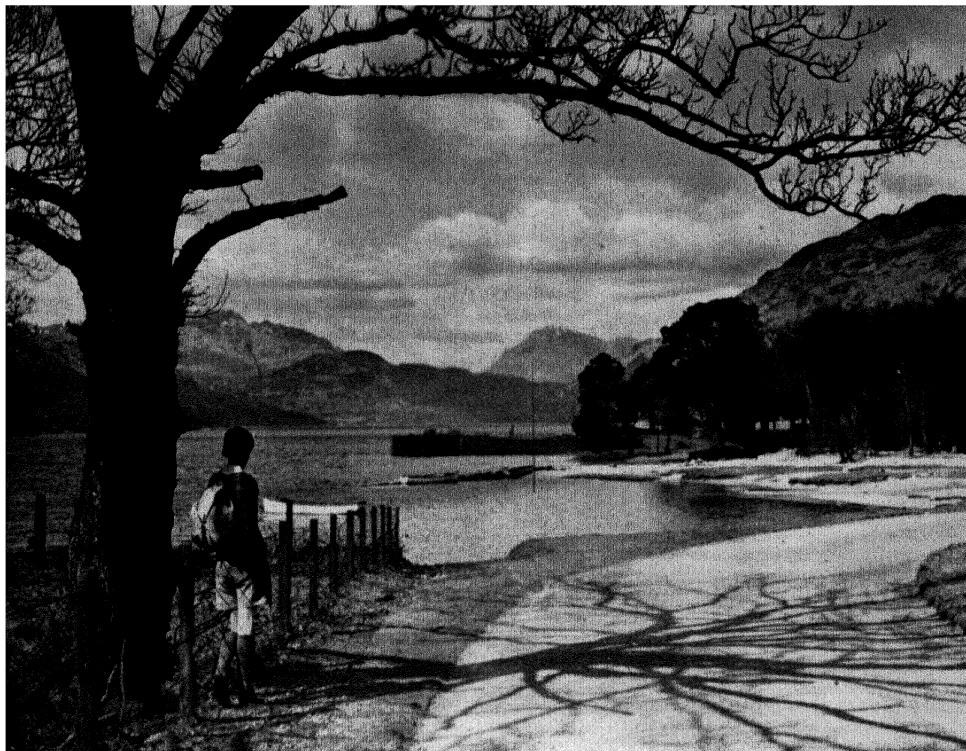
If you are surfeited with all this history and just want to see the great British present-day public at play, go to Blackpool, which offers not only the sea but an immense



The lonesome trail isn't so lonesome when friends ride together.. They are winding their way along High Sierra Trail amid the impressive splendours of Sequoia National Park in California.

amusement park. This is a favourite rendezvous during 'wakes' weeks, when an entire industrial town will stop working together, and go off to play together instead. The Braemar Games in Scotland are a thing to see, but don't imagine you can escape history, for modern sport is banned, and only the games of the early Scots are played to the exciting whine of the bagpipes and the swirl of kilts. Maybe you'd rather have a quiet game of golf on the most famous links in the world at St Andrews. If ancient British customs enthrall you go to Wales for an Eisteddfodd, where the women will wear long black dresses and tall black hats with white lace frills underneath, and men and women alike will sing as no other Britons can. If you've almost spent your vacation allowance try a flutter on the Derby, which is run at Epsom, or the races at a dozen other places. If you feel like yachting go to Cowes providing you can afford it, or if you like your sailing without swank or extravagance hire a boat on the Norfolk Broads.

Britain has no system of national parks owned and administered by the Government, as in America. But the National Trust, supported by generous gifts from individuals, has bought or leased some 100,000 acres, including famous beauty spots like Dovedale



The solitary hiker, rucksack on back, pauses to admire the beauties of Loch Lomond in Scotland. There is no lake in the world more famed than Loch Lomond, spread beneath its "bonnie bonnie braes."

and places of historic interest. The Wye Valley (with Tintern Abbey) is heavenly. You can lose yourself on Dartmoor or the wild moors of Yorkshire or the Highlands of Scotland. You can climb Snowdon or the mountains of the Lake District, and though they are not as high as American mountains, they are dangerous enough if you're not experienced.

Britain does not possess the immense industries of America, though at the present time some of the Royal Ordnance factories are quite a sight to see, and so is the model chocolate factory in the model village of Bournville, in Birmingham.

These excursions are for people who find themselves in the rare possession of a holiday. All the year round, at week-ends and on national holidays, both Britons and Americans contrive to have quite a lot of fun. Bicycling is a favourite relaxation among British young people, who can find cheap and pleasant accommodation at Youth Hostels, but it is not nearly so popular in America. Britons like to walk too, with a rucksack on their backs. Americans on the whole spend their leisure in cars, though some like to climb or hike along mountain trails. Young folk in both countries enjoy camping, but I don't know of any development in America such as the organized



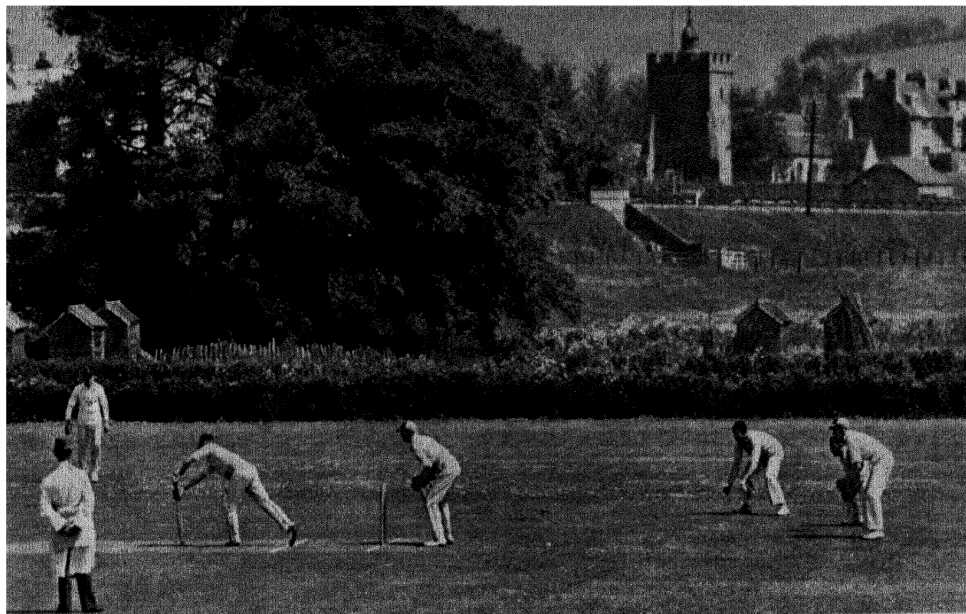
A fierce game, baseball. Weird armour and ability to tie yourself in a knot are essential. It's the American national game, played by small boys on vacant lots and by professional teams in great sports stadiums before thousands of frantic fans. It's hot work in summer.

camp in England which grew like mushrooms just before the war—hundreds of huts cheek-by-jowl, organized games, dances, sports—a noisy, gregarious, and inexpensive holiday which a lot of people seem to like. Picnics are somewhat more elaborate affairs in America, where every park is provided with tables and benches by the dozen, than in Britain, where you sit on the ground to eat your lunch in any grassy green spot.

Both countries have their great organized sports—baseball and football in America, cricket and football in England; and in both, small boys in backyards and vacant lots energetically chase or kick a ball. Britons don't know much about baseball, and neither do I. It is played on a diamond, with a bat which is circular and not flat like a cricket bat, by nine men who spend most of their time bent over with their hands on their knees ready to spring into action when the pitcher hurls the ball and the batter gives it a tremendous whack.

Americans don't know much about cricket, and I can't be very helpful here either—you can see it played any fine summer day in any village in England.

The great American holiday is Independence Day, on the Fourth of July, when every one joins in picnics or pageantry punctuated with a great many bangs and fireworks. American children used always to be supplied with Chinese fire-crackers (fascinating red explosives with a wick sticking out of one end which you light singly and throw away hastily, unless you are prodigal enough to hang a bunch over the



Cricket is a sedate game, with its players neatly got up in white, and its calm umpire on whom no one will waste a ripe tomato. Cricket is England's national game, played at the famous Lord's or the Oval and on a thousand village greens in every corner of the country.

branch of a tree and set off the whole lot together). I have always felt it was a shame that British children on Guy Fawkes Day (November 5) were deprived of this special brand of fireworks, though they seem to make plenty of disturbance with the kinds they do have.

Christmas is perhaps the greatest of all national festivals in Britain and America, though Scotland makes rather more of New Year celebrations, when the haggis (an acquired taste !) is piped in with the bagpipes, and a dark man leaves the house for a moment in order that he may be the first to step over the threshold in the New Year, thus bringing good fortune to the home. In both countries on Christmas Eve stockings are hung up by the children to receive the bounty of Father Christmas (Santa Claus in America). On Christmas Day the tree is lighted, and gifts make a litter of tissue paper and holly-patterned ribbon over the floor. Christmas dinner is rather alike on both sides of the Atlantic—turkey and plum pudding. In America the bread sauce might be lacking, with cranberries as a substitute, and perhaps candied sweet potatoes and sweet corn as well. Sometimes pumpkin-pie (also an acquired taste !) and mincepie take the place of pudding. America has one charming feature which Britain lacks. Between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day Christmas-trees stand alight in the windows of thousands of homes for every passer-by to see. Sometimes the tree is put on the veranda or the front lawn, and a fresh fall of snow may add Nature's decorative touch to the coloured lights and tinsel. Nearly every



Summer picnics are a great feature of American life. Even staid business men like Rotarians enjoy them. Parks and picnic grounds are usually provided with tables and benches for public use. Grass isn't so fresh and inviting as in Britain.

city has its municipal tree set up in the main square or park. There is an exciting festive spirit abroad as you walk about the streets on a cold, star-littered night.

The custom of carol-singing is distinctly British. For days before Christmas small boys in groups of three or four can be heard wailing dismally about Good King Wenceslas until you are glad to give them pennies so that they will hurry to the next house. But sometimes a choir or a group of practised singers breaks into a Christmas carol on your doorstep, and this is a truly delightful experience. It is proper to invite them in to drink to Christmas joys, and it is pleasant when they accept.

In the summer many cities and even small towns in America provide community pleasure for citizens and visitors by flood-lighting their fountains in colours. The effect of changing light playing upon spray and flowing water is astonishingly lovely. Some cities have most elaborate fountains with terraces and waterfalls.

Thanksgiving Day, in November, is essentially an American festival which originated when the Pilgrims gave thanks for the first harvest after they had suffered great privations in the new land. It is a family occasion, and there's very much the same dinner as at Christmas. The turkeycock with his tail spread is the symbol of Thanksgiving, just as the pumpkin hollowed out to take a candle which lights up the grotesque face chiselled in the yellow flesh is a symbol of Hallowe'en, which Americans seem to celebrate more than the British. Decoration, or Memorial, Day (May 30),





The British don't go in for organized public picnics, like Americans. They prefer an intimate picnic with family or friends. Grass is so green and the countryside so inviting that tables are not necessary. No picnic is complete without tea.

which honours men who have fallen in war, has been observed since the Civil War. More attention is paid in Great Britain than in America to Easter and Good Friday, though American children do vie with one another to see who can eat the greatest number of coloured Easter eggs, and every year the White House lawn, which slopes down to Pennsylvania Avenue, is a brilliant scene when thousands of children gather to roll Easter eggs.

The circus, both in Britain and America, is a delight which never palls. But I think a circus loses something if it is staged in a building like Olympia in London, and not under the 'big top' where it most often appears in America. We used to get up at four o'clock in the morning to watch the circus train unload, and afterwards we would follow the elephants and the cages of wild beasts to the circus lot, and marvel as the tented city rose before our eyes.

America does not have the sensible British arrangement of bank holidays, which arrange themselves at convenient intervals through the year. Easter Monday, Whit Monday, and August Bank Holiday are unknown in America, and so is Boxing Day (December 26), when in Britain tradesmen and servants traditionally expect their Christmas box or tip. Labour Day (September 1) is a holiday in America; labour in Britain observes May 1. In America there are no national holidays, though some are universally kept. Each state has jurisdiction to decide on the holidays to be legally



Neighbours meet for a community sing at Pie Town, New Mexico. Americans love music, and learn part singing at an early age. Sometimes vast crowds gather in city parks to sing under the direction of a song-leader.

recognized, and so they vary from state to state. Arizona celebrates the day she was admitted to the Union (February 14); Texas has her own Independence Day (March 2); some have a State Day, and in many Southern states Lee's birthday is celebrated. Washington's birthday (February 22) is a holiday in every state and Lincoln's birthday (February 12) in some.

For their day-by-day relaxation people in both countries turn to the radio and the cinema, or they go to the corner drug-store to sip ice-cream sodas while chatting with friends, or to the pubs to linger over a glass of beer (it *is* correct to serve it lukewarm as it comes in England). Or they collect things or develop hobbies; many a Briton has a little workshop tucked away in a shed—many an American home has a rumpus room where the children (real and grown-up) can make as much mess as they like. Britons go to visit their friends for a game of cards or a chat over tea-cups; Americans do the same, except that tea is likely to be coffee or maybe fruit juice. Some day not far off, parties of Britons and Americans will be mixing on either side of the Atlantic. What a lot they'll have to talk about!

There will be stories of the desperate years of war, ended for ever. The Americans



The Welsh are renowned for their fine voices. Miners and industrial workers meet for choral practice when the day's work is done. Every year enthusiasts flock to the Eisteddfodau to take part in musical and literary competitions.

will be eager to have a first-hand account of British experiences, but the British visitor will be reluctant to speak about them. The American will have to draw him out, and even then he will be unduly modest. For while the American dramatizes his own experiences, the Briton generally makes an understatement about his.

So let me, for the benefit of the Americans, set down a little of the record. I would like to speak especially about British women, but if I could find words adequate to the task the women, I imagine, would only be embarrassed. For they are beyond praise. I wish every American could have seen their cool courage in time of peril, their quiet fortitude amid the ruins of their homes, their strength and resolution in the face of death and destruction. They have been separated from their menfolk and children. The younger women have taken up life in barracks and billets away from home and among strangers. There has been heartache and sorrow, endless hard work, and a complete disruption of the ordinary trends of life. Through it all, British women have maintained their cheerful good humour.

I don't mean to suggest that the men—soldiers and airmen and sailors, the Home Guard, the hard-pressed factory workers—have not shown the same admirable

qualities. They have. But by training and tradition they have been better prepared. High courage was expected of them. British women have never before been put to so great a test. They have not before been given such responsibilities. Suddenly, overnight, women have emerged from the shelter of their homes, and turned their hands and minds to tasks which a few weeks earlier would have been unthinkable. Men have been astounded at their quick skill and capabilities. Women themselves have been a little surprised that they never had the chance before to show what they could do.

Looking back over these dark years of war, and reviewing the steadfast tenacity of British men and women, an American can only humbly say, "What a people!" But Americans and Britons visiting each other will not want to dwell long on the grim past. There'll be a lot to say about the bright hopes for the future and the fine struggle that must go on through the years to free the world from want and fear. And they'll have some good laughs together too. The Briton will report how, when a paint-shop was bombed, the owner cheerfully hung out a sign which said, "Professional Jealousy." Or how one enterprising shopkeeper, carrying on in a corner of his wrecked shop, proudly advertised, "Hitler may bomb our building, but he cannot destroy our values."

The American may come across with one of the tall tales they're so fond of. It was Benjamin Franklin who started the tall tale out of annoyance with the stories sent back to English newspapers by Englishmen who had been only short-time visitors to America. (Our two countries seem linked together in a lot of ways.) Franklin solemnly wrote to *The Times*, describing American sheep whose tails were so heavy with wool that they had to be supported on small carts, and the grand leap of the whale up Niagara Falls which "is esteemed by all who have seen it as one of the finest spectacles of Nature."

I wonder whether the Briton will be amused at the cat who ate cheese so that he could breathe down the mousehole with baited breath; or the man who was so lazy that he crossed swordgrass with ordinary grass, so that when the wind blew the grass on the lawn would cut itself; or the carpenter roofing a barn in a fog who found that he had shingled fifteen feet beyond the roof. Will he, I wonder, think that corny, screwy tales like the mongoose story are funny or just silly? A sour-faced farmer was sitting in a train with a covered box beside him, when a hustling commercial traveller (drummer in America) boarded the train. "What you got in that box, stranger?" asked the drummer. "Mongoose," said the farmer. "Say, what's a mongoose?" "Little animal that kills snakes." "Whatcha want to kill snakes for?" "Got a brother." "Whatsya brother got to do with snakes?" "Drinks." "But those ain't real snakes." "This ain't a real mongoose."

There'll be a new crop of blitz yarns and tall stories before the end of the war. There'll be some kidding and leg-pulling, but we'll have got so well acquainted that we can take it. And maybe, after all, we'll discover that there's a sense of fun, if not a sense of humour, on both sides of the Atlantic.















